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THE FUGITIVES WERE FAR FROM THEIR MASTER'S DWELLING

FAIRY TALES *from* BALTIC SHORES

folk-lore stories from
Estonia

Adapted and Translated by
EUGENIE MUTT

Illustrated by
JEANNETTE BERKOWITZ

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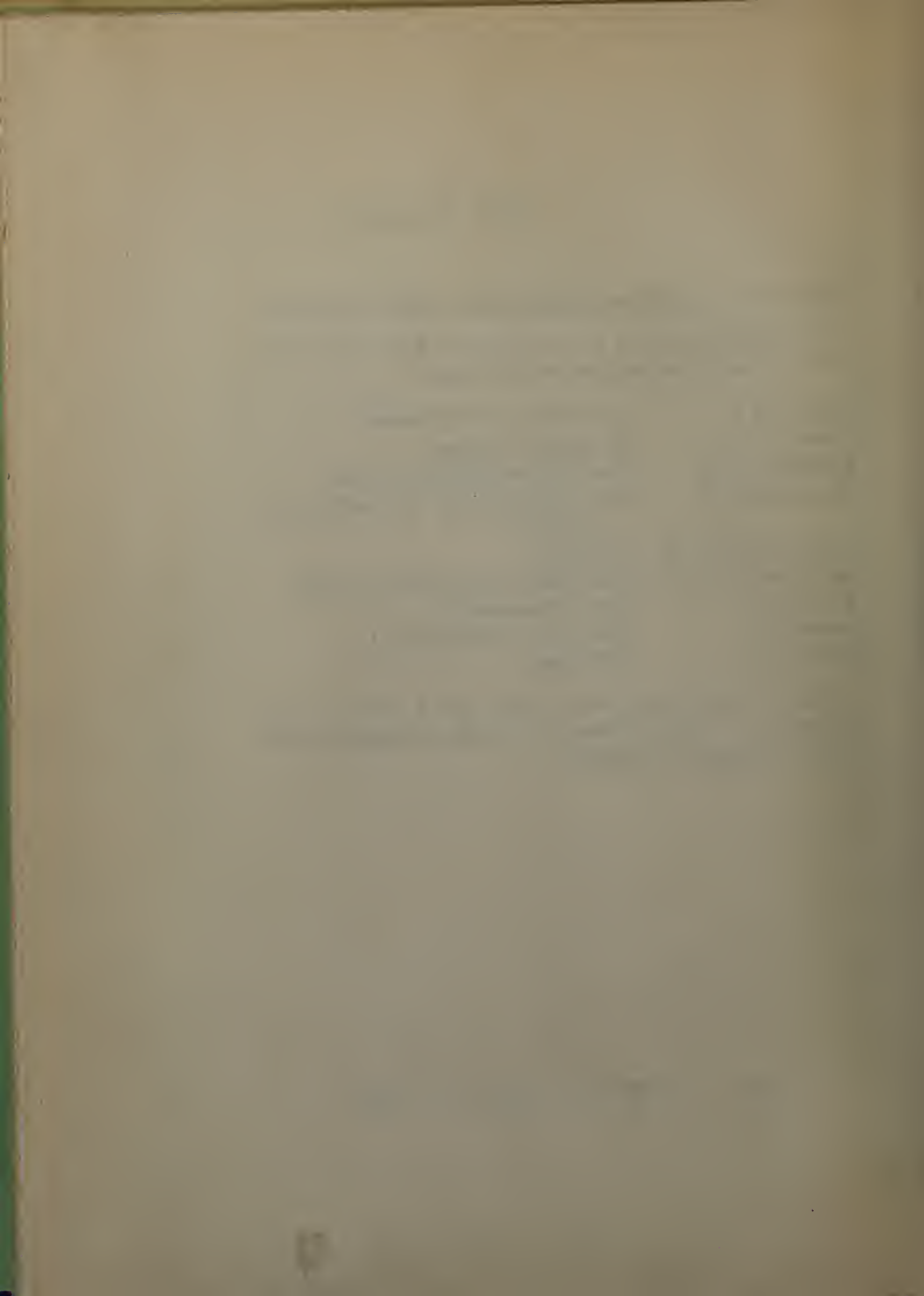
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Sincerest thanks are due to Prof. M. J. Eisen, of the University of Tartu, Estonia, for his kind suggestions and advice in making the selections.



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FOREWORD

ON the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea, the sea of Vikings and amber, the sea of Hansa, there live Estonians.

The name Estonia does not mean much to the American reader. If at all, it is known in the text-books of geography as a tiny colored spot on the map of the World. But few nations have had a more varied and more romantic past and possess a richer folklore than the Estonians.

Estonians belong to the Finnish-Ugric race like their nearest racial relatives, the Finns and the Hungarians. Most historians are agreed that sometime before the Birth of Christ, the ancestors of the present Estonians, in their long and slow advance from the East, (probably from the valley of the upper Volga or the region of the Ural



Mountains) reached the shores of the Baltic Sea and occupied the area where we find them to-day. Since the eighth century A. D. close relations have existed between the Estonians and their neighbors and from this time on authentic historical data are available.

The records show that the Estonians were a warlike, free and prosperous nation and had reached a comparatively high degree of civilization by the beginning of the thirteenth century. They were daring warriors, famous seamen and dreaded pirates, the terror of the Baltic seamen. In 1187 the Estonians raided the opposite shore of the Baltic Sea and destroyed the old Swedish capital Sigtuna and compelled the Swedes to establish their capital in a new place.

The geographical and commercial position of the country was, and is still very important and made it a coveted land for all her neighbors. For the defense of their country, the ancient Estonians built hundreds of fortresses, now all in ruins, to protect her against foreign invaders. But in the beginning of the thirteenth century the Estonians lost their independence in a desperate struggle against the overwhelming power of the mighty German Order of the Knights of the Sword. Since that time Estonians were ruled in succession by Danes, Germans, Poles, Swedes and Russians, until as a



result of the World War, Estonia like so many other European nations, regained its independence and since February 24, 1918, it is an independent republic.

But never under all these foreign dominations, did the Estonians forget their former liberty or lose their nationality. Stubbornly they clung to their language, handing over orally, from generation to generation, their inspiring folk-songs and tales and national traditions, which kept alive the memory of the happy days of their glorious past.

In the second half of the nineteenth century a strong wave of awakening national consciousness swept the peoples of Europe and also touched the little Estonian nation. Educated Estonians became ardent patriots and began enthusiastically to study the past of their people and to collect the large store of Estonian oral literature. Dr. Fr. R. Kreutzwald was the first to render a great service to his people by collecting Estonian folk songs and deeply poetic folk tales. Of the songs he collected and wrote down, he compiled the great national epic of Estonia, the "Kalevipoeg," which in itself is a wonderful piece of literature and is compared in its beauty with the great Greek epics, the Iliad and the Odyssey. His work aroused great popular interest in Estonian folklore at home and abroad. Prof. M. J. Eisen, Dr. J. Hurt and Dr. O. Kallas



and others continued this work of collecting songs, fairy tales, proverbs, riddles, beliefs and customs. Assisted by about 1,000 volunteers they accumulated one of the greatest collections of folklore in the world. The collection of Dr. Hurt contains 45,000 ancient folk songs, 10,000 fairy tales, 52,000 proverbs, 40,000 riddles, 60,000 forms of ancient superstitions. Only a part of this collection has been published; the greatest part of it still lies in manuscript form in archives.

In making the selection of the Estonian fairy tales, I have tried to choose the tales which I consider to be the most representative of Estonia and which, at the same time, do not have too familiar variants in other countries. Moreover, as this selection is destined for children, I have chosen those tales which are most popular among the Estonian children.

Some of the tales are very original in their character, many of them, as far as I know, appear here for the first time in a foreign language. In others, the themes are more or less cosmopolitan or are variants of tales which are found the world over, but the setting, the background and the spirit are characteristically Estonian—simple in manner, full of details of peasant life and wisdom.

I hope that these stories will give the reader a true idea of the deeply poetic imagination of the



Estonian people, of their love of beauty, of their folk-wisdom and folk-humor. They will take the reader to places which are new and strange to him and among a new people.

In some instances the English text is a literal translation from the original Estonian, while other stories are treated freely and are somewhat changed; a few are shortened, some incidents modified and rearranged, but the spirit and the character have been preserved throughout.

For the better understanding of the Estonian fairy tales a few words must be said about the ancient religion and superstitions of the Estonians, which naturally are reflected in their stories. Witches, magicians, sorcerers, magic incantations, spells and charms ruled over the everyday life of the ancient Estonians. The religion of the Estonians, before the introduction of Christianity in the thirteenth century, was chiefly Nature-worship and ancestor-worship. All Nature appeared to them animated; everything—every tree, stone, bush, river and sea, meadow and forest and home had its soul or spirit, who lived in it and protected it. Some of them were kind and beloved by the people, while others were malicious and feared. To some people these spirits, both kind and malicious, revealed themselves from time to time, and in different forms, usually in that of an old man,



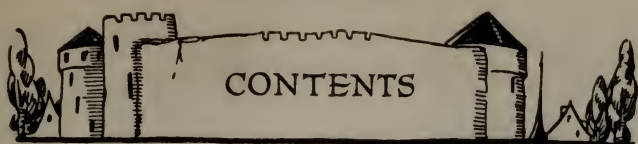
a beautiful woman or an animal or in any other form, just as they chose. The Forest Father, the Forest Mother, the Mother of the Sward or Murueit, and her lovely daughters the Wood-nymphs, the Underground People, the Dwarfs and the Nixes are the best known inhabitants of the Estonian fairy world.

Usually they are kind and benevolent to good and honest people, but punish severely all who are bad and wicked.

In this collection of Estonian Fairy Tales is also included "The Sea Wedding," a sad and melancholy story but one most beloved by the ancient Liivs, now a small, almost extinct Finnish tribe, who by race and by language are closely related to the Estonians. The remains of this nation live to the south of the Estonians on the eastern coast of the Baltic Sea and are chiefly occupied in fishing. Dr. O. Loorits of the University of Tartu, Estonia, has only recently collected the folklore of the Liivs and here I have retold "The Sea Wedding" with his kind permission.

EUGENIE MUTT.



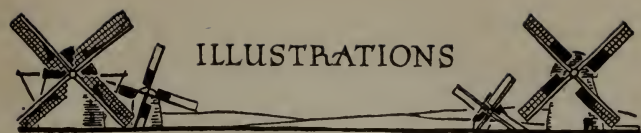


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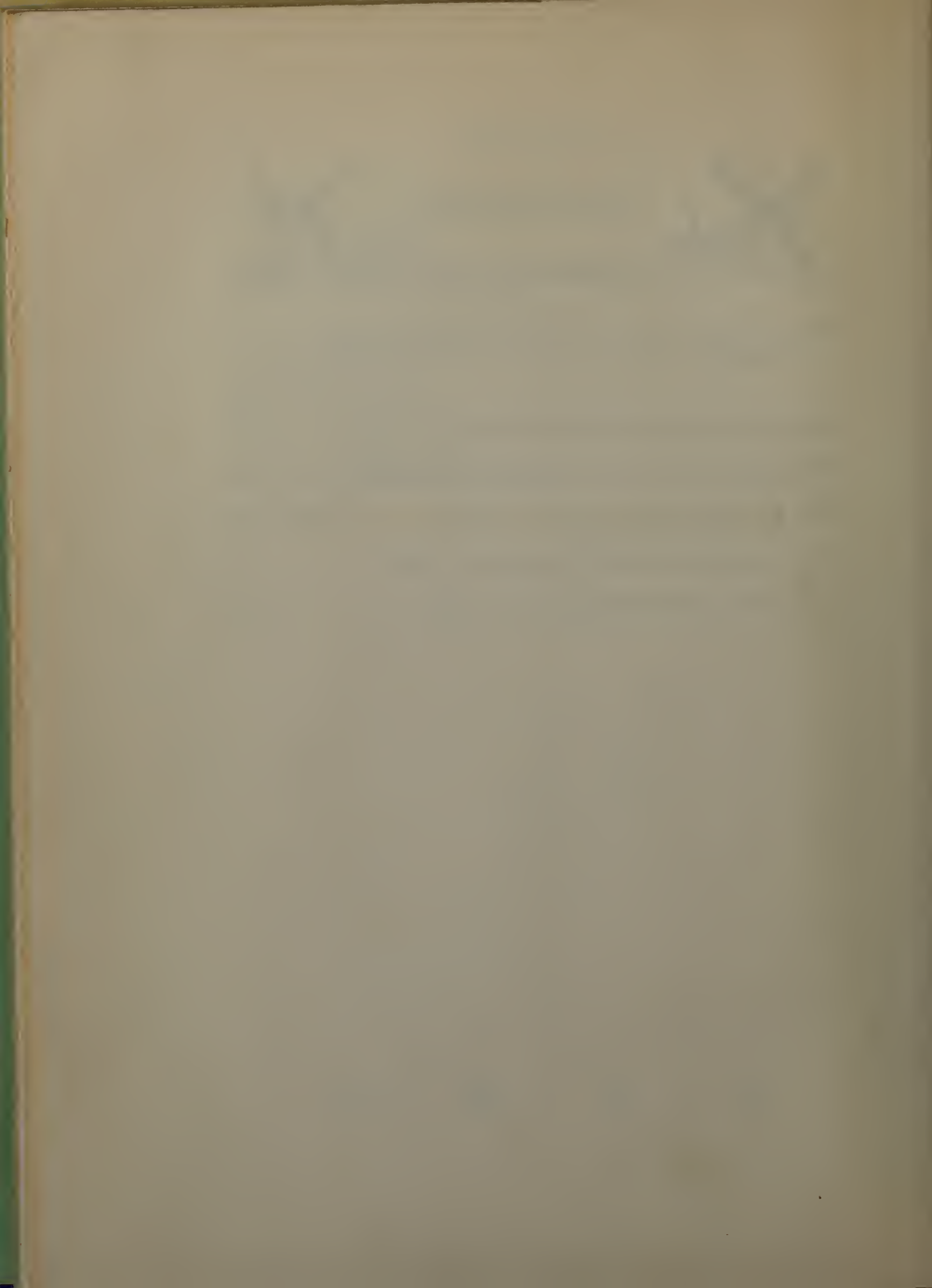


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THE SON OF A KNIGHT

THE SON OF A KNIGHT



THE SON OF A KNIGHT

I.

ONCE upon a time a rat and a sparrow decided to go to live in a foreign country. They paid their debts, took back the things they had borrowed from their neighbors, bade good-bye to their friends and started on their way.

In a certain foreign country they soon found a pretty place and said to each other: "Let us settle down here!"

So, they first built themselves a shelter and then they began to try out the soil.

They agreed to sow wheat. The rat ploughed, the sparrow sowed and harrowed. When the harvest time arrived, the sparrow said to the rat:



"You are bigger than I and you eat more, I do not like that!"

"Then, let us divide the crop," suggested the rat.

"We have no measure," replied the sparrow.

They decided that the whole crop should be divided into two equal parts, counting it, grain by grain. They counted and they counted and they counted. One grain was left over.

The sparrow said: "Rat, your teeth are sharp, bite this grain in two."

"Your beak is sharper, you had better try!" said the rat.

The sparrow wanted to try and he did, but accidentally he swallowed the grain! Then they quarreled furiously, blaming and reviling each other. The adversaries decided to ask the other animals for help and thus the war started.

The rat found the old bear in the woods and asked for his help, promising him half of the wheat which he would get from the fight. To this the bear consented. The sparrow found a strange big bird by the name of Teevits and asked the bird to side with him and to help him, promising for a reward half of the wheat which he would get.

On the following day the fight began, and the end of it was—that the bear with his strong claws pulled off the skin, with all his feathers, of the



Teevits. Teevits finding himself naked, wept bitterly and tried to hide himself in the forest, and so the rat was victorious.

Then the rat and the sparrow made peace and the bear carried off his part of the wheat into his den.

2.

Teevits, having no clothes, was freezing and cuddling himself in the forest and moaning and moaning like a sick man.

It happened that a Knight was hunting in the forest and came near to the bird. Teevits begged: "Have pity on me! Take me to your house and feed me until my feathers grow again! Your care and your expenses will be rewarded a thousand times!"

The Knight thought: "I am curious to see what a strange bird this is and how it could reward me; I will take it home!"

"What do you eat?" asked the Knight when he got home.

"Every day you must give me a fatted ox!" said Teevits.

So every day a fatted ox was placed before the bird and he devoured it in a moment as if it were a young mouse.

Soon all the oxen were eaten. The wife of the



Knight became angry and demanded that the useless bird should be taken into the forest and shot.

Listening to this proposal Teevits begged again: "Give me at least a chicken every day! You see yourself I have no feathers yet—whither can I go?"

The Knight had pity upon the poor bird and ordered his servants to give him a chicken every day.

All the chickens were soon devoured and the Knight's wife scolded even more than before demanding that the bird be taken into the forest and killed.

"Give me at least an egg a day!" begged Teevits mournfully. "Where can I go? You see yourself I am not covered with feathers!"

Again the Knight had pity upon the poor bird and every day it was offered an egg.

When all the eggs were eaten the wife's anger was so great that the Knight had to take the bird into the forest. Teevits had already all his feathers and said to the Knight: "I do not want anything more from you! Sit on my back and go with me for your reward!"

The Knight obeyed. Teevits arose high into the air under the clouds and proceeded on its way in the direction of the North. They flew and they flew over a big forest; suddenly the bird slipped



from under the Knight and the unhappy man, expecting to fall from this great height, saw only his death ahead of him. But before he could fall upon the tops of the big trees, the bird was under him again and they continued on their course.

This happened twice more; once when they were flying over a big city, with many towers and again when they were over a wide sea. Both times the bird disappeared only for a moment, and was back under the Knight before he had fallen.

After a long trip, flying over cities and seas, Teevits descended on the borders of a great forest.

"Now you will get your reward," said the bird.

"But why did you frighten me in this strange way?" asked the Knight.

"Exactly in the same way I was three times near my death, when your wife demanded that you should shoot me. Now you know how great was my fear at that time."

Then the bird gave the Knight a small box with the words: "Here is the pay for your kindness. Only do not open the box until you are in the boundaries of your estate!" Saying this the bird flew noisily up and was soon out of sight.

The Knight inspected the box from all sides and was curious to know what it contained. He was much tempted to open it, but the warning of the bird came to his mind in time.



So he went on his way, but his desire to open the box became stronger and stronger.

At last he took it out of his pocket and said: "Happen what may, I will open it!"

And he opened the box. Instantly a golden ball rolled out of the box and spread itself out before his eyes into a big big golden city, which shone and glittered in the sunshine like fire. The Knight now understood how much he had harmed himself by his childish curiosity, for how could he put the city back into the box! Tears of regret filled his eyes, but that did not help him.

Then he saw an old gray man stepping out of the forest, who came nearer and asked the Knight the cause of his grief.

The Knight related his misfortune and regretted his idle curiosity.

"What will you promise me, if I put the golden city back into the box?"

"Ask anything you want, even half of the golden city itself," replied the Knight.

"Promise to give me what you yourself do not know you possess, and I will fulfill your wish!" said the old man.

The Knight thought and thought: what could it be that he himself did not know he had? Something at home? It must be some trifle, he thought,



and promised to give it to the old man as a reward for his help.

The stranger remarked: "Well! The man—by his word, the ox—by his horns," and he took the box, turned his back to the Knight, made some magic signs and said:

"Roll, roll little city,
Roll together like this ball!"

The golden city began to grow smaller and smaller and soon rolled into the box in the shape of a small golden ball. The old man gave the box to the Knight and they both went on in the direction of the manor, the Knight, with his treasure box, and the stranger with the hope of a great reward.

3.

When he got home the Knight found that the most unexpected thing had happened. He had been away for seven years! Soon after he had left a son was born to his wife, so that the boy was now seven years old.

It was suddenly clear to the Knight what he had promised to give away to the stranger. The parents begged him to take anything else, only to leave them their son. The stranger persisted, and demanded that which he had been promised. The only thing he agreed to do was to leave the boy



for seven years more with his parents upon the condition that at the end of that time they would not disturb him again with their pleas.

The seven years passed quickly as if it were only seven weeks. The day of parting drew near.

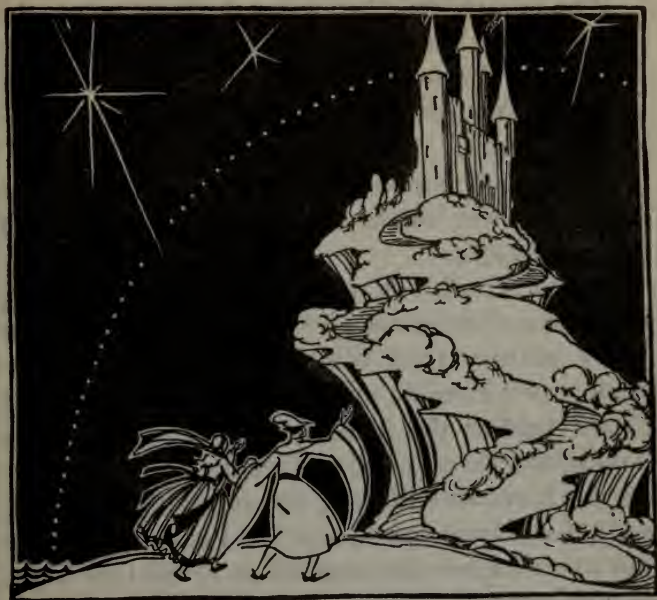
The boy had grown into a brave and sturdy youth. He comforted his parents by telling them not to be afraid, saying that he was going with the stranger willingly to keep the promise his father had given. He expressed the hope of coming back some day and asked them to keep the golden ball until his return.

On a certain day the stranger stood at the gate and demanded his reward.

The Youth bade his parents good-bye and left with the stranger.

They had walked for a long time when they arrived at a dark precipice. This they descended and kept on walking until a wide river stopped their progress. The stranger pronounced some magic words, which the Youth could not understand and in a moment a pretty bridge appeared over the river, and they crossed it without stopping. Soon they came to the stranger's dwelling-place, with many buildings and outhouses, huts and caves, even more than in the manor of the Knight. The Youth understood at once that he had to deal with a well-to-do and skilled man.





AT LAST THEY CAME TO THE MANOR

They entered the house. There his eyes fell upon a young girl of great beauty, the like of whom the Youth had nowhere seen.

The stranger said to the Young Knight: "To-day you may rest after your long journey, but to-morrow you have to start work!" and he went himself to bed and was soon snoring so loudly that the walls resounded.



When the twilight had fallen the Maiden told the Youth about the place to which he had been brought: "From here no living being has ever escaped. Your bringer is none other than Vanasarvik himself."

"Is it then impossible to get away if life here would become unbearable?" asked the troubled Young Knight.

"Dear Youth! Vanasarvik's heels are swifter than those of the wind, and your home is full seven years' journey from this place. Only by witchcraft was it possible to reach this place in a short time," replied the Maiden, and seeing that the Youth became very sad and seemed to regret leaving his home so willingly, she added: "Do not be sad! I will help you as much as I can. Take care not to reveal our companionship to the Old Man, or we shall both be lost!"

The Young Knight did not sleep much that night, he thought of his beloved parents, of his home and of the pretty Maiden.

His new Master did not awake until toward the evening of the second day. When the Youth went to him to ask what work he was to do, the Old Man said:

"For to-morrow I shall give you very easy work. Take the scythe and mow down as much grass as the white horse can eat in a day, and then clean out



the stable. Beware, for if you fail in this undertaking, it will go badly with you."

The Youth was glad to have received so easy a task. True, never before had he held a scythe in his hands, but he was strong and healthy and believed he could manage it as easily as any laborer.

When he was about to retire to sleep, the Maiden slipped into his room and asked him what kind of work he had been assigned. When she discovered what it was, she exclaimed:

"Woe to you! Never can you do this, for the white horse is insatiable; scarcely twenty mowers can provide it with grass and it requires at least ten men to clean the stable. But have no fear! As long as I am alive I shall help you. Mark well what I tell you! When you have placed a few armsful of grass into the manger, then, in the presence of the white horse, begin to plait a firm hoop of willow-twigs. When the horse asks for what purpose you are making the hoop, say:

"'Oh, that is nothing in particular. With this hoop I shall bind up your mouth if you wish to eat more grass than I give you.'"

The following morning the Youth did exactly as he was taught. When the white horse heard why he was making the hoop, it sighed deeply and suddenly stopped eating. In the afternoon, when his Master came to inspect his work, the grass was



in the crib and the floor was clean. He flew into a rage, since now that his orders were carried out exactly, he was deprived of the alternative of eating the Youth for a tasty breakfast as he had planned to do, and he departed, cursing angrily.

On the following day, the Master bade the Youth carry home a small haystack, which was still in the field, adding:

“Take care not to leave a handful of hay behind or it may cost you your life.”

“Not all the people of an entire village could bring home this haystack,” said the Maiden sadly, when she heard of this new task, “for what is taken away from the top, grows up from the bottom. But follow my advice closely and you will succeed. Arise before dawn, bring the white horse out of the stable, and take with you a strong rope; bind it around the haystack and fasten the horse to it. Then climb on the haystack and start counting: one, two, three, four, five and on. The horse will ask at once:

“‘What are you counting there?’

“And you must answer: ‘Nothing especially! To amuse myself I began counting the wolves I see on the edge of the forest, but there are too many of them and I cannot count them all.’

“Hardly will you have finished speaking, when



the horse will rush off like a tempest and in a few moments the haystack will be at home."

Before noon of the next day the Youth had finished his day's work and his Master went away, swearing and cursing more than ever.

The next task of the Youth was to take the white-headed calf to the pasture. Again he was warned by his Master to be careful and to watch the calf well, lest it run away and the Youth truly forfeit his life.

"There are many ten-year-old peasant boys who must guard whole herds of cattle; to manage only one calf can by no means be difficult for me," thought the Young Knight. And when the Maiden came, as usual, to inquire about the work he had been assigned for the next day, he said gaily:

"To-morrow I shall enjoy a half holiday, for I have only to take care of the white-headed calf."

"Oh, you unfortunate Youth!" sighed the Maiden. "You can never manage this calf! If you only knew how swift it is—it can run three times around the world in one day! But take this silken thread, tie one end of it to the leg of the calf, the other end to the toe of your own left foot and the calf will not move from your side, whether you sleep or watch."

Next morning without any trouble he led the



calf to the pasture by the silken thread and it did not move a step from his side but behaved like an obedient puppy. At sunset he took it back to the byre, where his Master received him in a passion.

In the evening the Youth went again to receive the instructions for his task. The Old Man gave him a sack of barley, saying:

“Take, here is barley, sow it; it will rise and ripen quickly. Then reap it, thresh and winnow; make malt and brew me a jug full of fresh beer for to-morrow morning!”

This time the Youth was frightened and turned pale as if his sentence of death was pronounced. Weeping bitterly he told the Maiden of the task the Old Man had given him. Showing the barley-sack he added:

“Here is my death!”

When he had finished the Maiden smiled and said:

“Fear nothing, only listen to my advice and follow it exactly! To-night, when it will be dark, go to the door of the Old Man’s Spirit-House and say:

“‘Spirits out! Sow the barley, pour beer in the jug!’ Early in the morning go and see what will have happened.”

The Youth carried out the given instructions



and slept. In the morning he went to the beer barrel and found it full of foaming beer! He filled the jug with beer and brought it to his Master. The Old Man gazed at him in bewilderment and broke into a fury:

"Well, you have not done this by yourself. I see you must have a good fairy for a friend and helper. But look out! If by to-morrow you have not built a bridge over the big river and made apple-trees with ripe apples on them grow at both ends of the bridge, it might cost you your life."

The Knight was more frightened than before, which seemed to please his Master.

In his distress the Youth told the Maiden again of this new task his Master had laid upon him.

"Do not fear! This task is not so hard as you think. In the evening, when it is dark, go to the border of the forest and call:

" ' Men, out of the forest!
Be alike in size and looks! ' "

Then tell them about the work they have to do, and then go back quietly to sleep."

On the next morning a pretty bridge was over the river and apple-trees were growing and were full of beautiful apples.

When all these tasks had been so successfully



accomplished, the Old Man called the Youth and the Maiden before him and said:

“I know you love and help each other, therefore come, when I have returned from my journey, early to-morrow morning, and I will unite you in marriage!”

The Old Man went away upon his journey.

The Youth could have danced and shouted for joy, so much was he pleased by his Master's promise.

But the Maiden did not receive the news with equal delight, she began to weep and she was frightened and could only stammer: “I know well what he means by marrying us: he wants to eat us for his breakfast! He has discovered that I have been your adviser and now we both must lose our lives!”

The Youth wanted to escape with her at once, but the cautious Maiden said:

“No! He will meet us on our way and no hope for our safety will be left. Better let us wait until he is again sleeping at home, then let us try to escape.”

On the next day the Old Man came home early and on going to bed said to the Youth:

“Do not forget to come to my room with the girl early to-morrow morning!”

When the Old Man had fallen asleep the



Maiden ordered the Youth to get from under the Old Man's pillow a small plate, but to be very careful not to awaken him.

This order fulfilled the Maiden brought two thistle flowers, gave one of them to the Youth and bade him put it on the plate; she put hers on the plate too.

What a miracle followed! The thistle flowers on the witch-plate began to talk to each other as human beings!

"Now let us go!" whispered the Maiden and seizing the Youth by his hand they both started to run as if fire were under their feet. They hastened across the new bridge, and ran further and further.

When Vanasarvik awoke, he heard voices in the next room and smiled malignantly:

"Talk on, soon your mouths will be closed forever!"

After waiting for them a good while he called:

"Children, why do you stay so long? Come say good-morning to me!"

No answer came, only the voices continued. The Old Man shouted again. Nothing! He shouted for the third time, but neither the Youth nor the Maiden appeared. At this moment the witch-plate came to his mind. He searched for it under his pillow: did not find it! Then he jumped out of his bed with the swiftness of a deer. He



found the room empty, and beheld the thistle flowers talking to each other. It was clear to him now how the clever Maiden had cheated him!

"I will catch you, I will catch you, miserable children!" he screamed and he rushed forth in a tempestuous rage!

In the meantime the young fugitives were far from their Master's dwelling, and the darkness of night was coming down upon them. The Maiden said:

"I have a feeling that the Old Man is pursuing us! To-night let us climb up into this spruce-tree and get some rest; on the ground he would find us at once."

And they climbed the spruce-tree. The silver brooch upon the Maiden's breast made a strong reflection in the river under the spruce, brilliant with moonlight, as if she were in the river herself.

It was not long before the fugitives heard the earth trembling, and in a few moments Vanasar-vik was at the river's bank. He looked hither and thither and suddenly shrieked:

"So ho! There into the river you went, little girl, to hide yourself, but did not think to cover your brooch! Wait, wait, little daughter! I am rather thirsty from my long run. I shall empty this brook and so get my clever servants back!"

So he began to drink. He drank and drank and



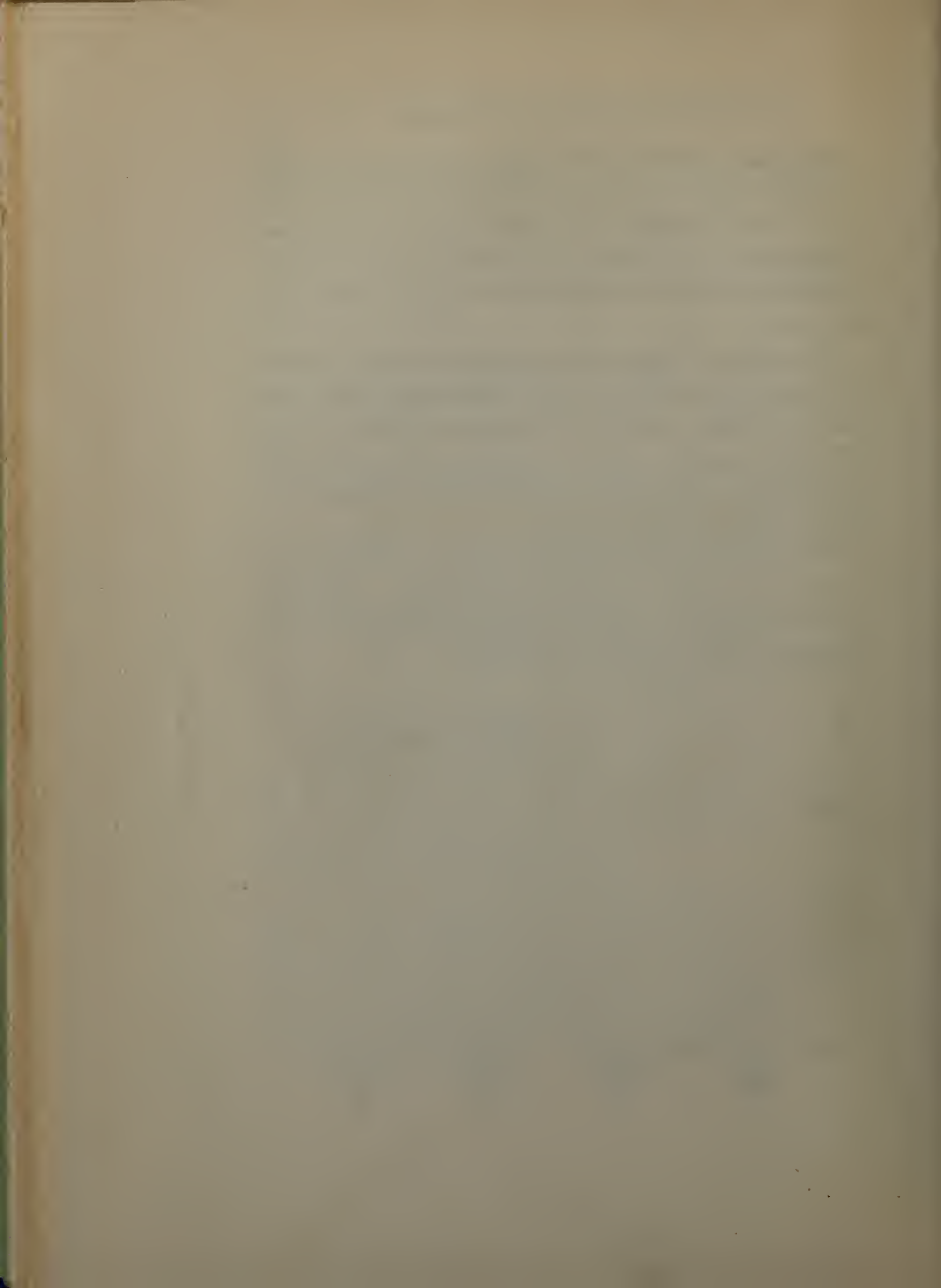
puffed and puffed until only a small mud-puddle was left. But the reflection of the brooch was seen even in the puddle. The Old Man drank again and again, and swelled and swelled, until—all of a sudden—he burst! and all the water ran back into the river.

It was now safe for the fugitives to descend and to continue on their way. After long traveling they at last reached the manor of the Young Knight's parents. He married the clever Maiden, his faithful companion and helper in all his hardships throughout the years.

The box with the golden ball was not forgotten—out of it rolled a splendid golden city. All who saw that splendor believed that the Young Knight was the richest man in the world.

U. S. 593428





THE GOLDSPINNERS

THE COLLEGE



THE GOLDSPINNERS

I WANT to tell you a beautiful story of the by-gone days, which happened at the time when the Lawns still listened to the speeches of the Quadruped and the Feathered Inhabitants of the world.

Once there lived in the woods, in a hut under shady trees, a lame old woman with her three beautiful daughters. The daughters bloomed like pretty flowers around a withered stem—their mother. The fairest of them was the youngest.

In the lonely place of their dwelling there was nobody to admire their beauty, except the sun by day, the moon and the stars by night:

Glowing bright like eyes of youth
Shone the sun upon their head wreaths
Glittered on their colored ribbons
Played on their girlish garments.



The old woman was sharp with her daughters, forcing them to work from morn till night. They had to sit behind the spinning-wheel turning golden flax into thread. Even on Thursday and Saturday nights were they not allowed to work for themselves, as was the custom of that country, to add the necessary things to their dowry chests; and if they had not taken up their knitting secretly, in the evening twilight or moonlight, their chests would have been empty.

The spinning never ended. The threads had to be matched in size and to be very fine. The spun thread was kept in a secret locked room, which the daughters never dared to enter. They even did not know from where the golden flax was brought. Two or three times every summer the Crone was absent for several days, returning always in the night-time and her daughters never knew where she had been or what she brought home with her. Before starting upon her journey the Crone gave them enough work to keep them busy while she was away.

The time arrived for the Crone to go. She assigned six days' work to the spinners, repeating her usual instructions: "Girls, work carefully, so that the golden thread will not tear or the glitter of the thread shall not fade or your happiness will come to an end."



Scarcely had their mother limped out of the door than the girls began to ridicule her instructions. "The golden thread does not tear even when you pull it much, let alone when you spin it," remarked the youngest sister. "And it is not possible for the glitter of the gold thread to vanish," added the others.

On the third day after their mother's departure an unusual event occurred. A young Prince of the house of Kalev was hunting in the woods. But it happened that he lost his way. He was so far from his companions that the barking of the dogs and blowing of the horns did not reach his ears. In his long search for the right road, he found at last the path which led to the lonely hut. The girls were frightened when the stranger appeared before them. At first they were confused, but happy to see so fair a stranger as the gallant Prince.

They had just finished their day's work and were sitting outside enjoying the evening coolness. They made friends with the young stranger and chatted familiarly with him. When at last the older sisters went to bed, the younger was still sitting on the threshold talking with their guest and the two did not close their eyes during the whole night. The moon and the stars were the only witnesses of the sweet words they exchanged and the secret confessions of their hearts.



In the meantime the news of the Prince's disappearance was brought to the city. The King was much alarmed. He immediately ordered that on the next morning before dawn a detachment of cavalry and a regiment of infantry be sent out to search for his lost son. The search lasted for several days, only on the third day did they reach the hut. The time had passed quickly for the Prince in the company of the maidens. Before parting he secretly promised the youngest sister to return in a short time and then willingly or by force take her with him as his bride. The elder sisters did not know anything of this agreement, but soon it became known in a strange way that nobody could expect.

Great was the fright of the youngest daughter when after the Prince had departed she was going to take up her spinning, and found that the golden thread on the spool was torn and the lustre of the golden thread was gone. The ends of the thread could be tied together, but the lustre would not return, in spite of all her rubbing, her sighs and her tears! "Misfortune jumps in through the door, steps through the window, creeps in through a cleft, where by chance it finds an opening,"—says a clever old proverb; and this happened now.

The old woman had returned in the night. On the next morning entering the room she under-



stood at once what had happened and there was no end to her anger. The apologies of the daughters did not help, she knew well what kind of visitor had whispered in the ears of her youngest daughter, behind her back! The old woman began to curse in terrible words, threatening to break the neck of the young man and to throw his flesh to the wild beasts, if he ever dared to come back.

The youngest daughter, red as a boiled crawfish, could not find rest by day or sleep in the night. The thought that her mother might fulfill her evil intentions and the Prince meet his death, if he would return, grieved her incessantly. Early in the morning, while her mother and sisters were yet having their dawn-dreams, she stole out of the room in the dewy coolness of the morning. Fortunately, in her childhood she had learned from her mother the language of the birds and now she could make use of it. On the nearest spruce tree sat a Raven, preening his feathers: "Dear bird, wisest of all the birds, will you help me?"—"What aid do you need?" asked the Raven. "Fly far over the country to the stately city where the King's palace is. Get in touch with the King's son, the Prince, and tell him my misfortune."

Then she told the Raven her whole story, begging him to tell the Prince never to return to her hut. The Raven promised to do everything if only



he could find in the city anybody who could understand his language.

Before evening the Raven was back and called from the summit of the spruce tree "kronks, kronks." The frightened girl hastened out to receive the message. The Raven had had good luck; in the King's garden he had found the son of a Wind-Sorcerer, who perfectly understood his language, and who took the message to the young Prince.

The Prince's answer was that the Raven must hurry back and tell the Maiden to be on the watch on the ninth night, then the deliverer would come to free the chicken from the claws of the old hawk. Then they gave the Raven a piece of meat to strengthen his wings and sent him back. The Maiden thanked the Black Bird for the news and strictly kept the secret, waiting in excitement for the approach of the fatal day.

On the evening of the ninth day, when her mother and sisters had retired, the Maiden glided out of the room on tiptoes, sat on the lawn in the shadow of the trees to wait for the rescuer. Hope and fear filled her heart. The cock had crowed already the second time, but nothing was heard in the evening's stillness. Suddenly between the second and third cock-crow something like a distant trampling of hoofs reached her ears. She arose,





SHE AROSE AND WENT TO MEET THE COMERS

and directed by the sound, went to meet the comers, so that their approaching would not awaken the sleepers inside the hut. Soon she perceived a detachment of soldiers, in front of whom rode the Prince. He had found the road easily by the secret signs he had made on the trees, when he was on his way home. Seeing the girl he jumped from his horse, lifted her up into his saddle and they galloped away. The moon between the trees gave



enough light, so that they did not lose the path again.

The morning dawn untied the tongues of the birds and their twittering filled the air. If the Maiden had listened to their warnings she and the Prince would have profited much. But the Maiden listened only to the honeyed words of the youth, who begged her to abandon her useless fear and to believe in the protecting power of himself and his soldiers. The sun was already high in the sky when they reached the open country.

Fortunately the Crone did not discover the elopement of her daughter early in the morning; only later seeing that the work was undone and as nobody knew where the girl was, her mother decided that she had fled. At once she devised a malicious plan to pursue the fugitive. She brought from the garret nine different kinds of magic herbs, added some charmed salt to them and tied them up in a rag, wound some woollen stocking thread around that, muttered curses and witch words over it and threw it to the wind, while singing:

Whirlwind, lend wings
Windmother with thy flapping skirts
Hurry on this little ball
With swiftness of the snow-storm;
Help to overtake the offender
To punish the audacious thief.



Before noon the Prince with his suite arrived on the shores of a wide river over which led a narrow bridge. They had to cross the bridge one by one. The Prince was just in the middle of the river, when the witch-bundle, carried by the wind, arrived and touched the horse as if it were a gad-fly. The horse snorted in fear, reared up and before anybody was able to help, the Maiden slipped off and fell into the river. The Prince was ready to jump in after her, but the soldiers detained him, as the river was bottomless and no human power could save her.

Fright and grief made the Prince insensible to everything. The soldiers carried him home against his will. For weeks he sat in deep mourning in a lonely room, refusing food and drink. The King summoned up all Sorcerers and Wise Men of his kingdom from far and near, but nobody could explain the nature of the Prince's illness. Then the son of the Wind-Sorcerer advised that the famous Finnish Sorcerer be sent for.

In a week the famous Finnish Sorcerer arrived, carried by the wind. He said to the King: "Mighty King, this disease has come from the wind, a wicked witch-bundle has caused it. Neither magic words nor healing herbs will help, only time can cure him. Send him often out in open air so that the wind may scatter his sorrows."



And so little by little the Prince recovered and confided everything to his parents.

A year had passed since the accident at the bridge when the Prince, by chance, came to the fatal place. Bitter tears filled his eyes recollecting the past, as he suddenly heard a sweet voice singing:

Forced by mother's evil spell
Water took thy beauteous Maiden
Waves have covered the little one
Ahti buried thy beloved.

The Prince looked all around trying to discover the singer, but he saw nobody. Only a water-lily was swinging on the water's surface. The flower naturally could not sing, mysterious power must be hidden somewhere. He tied his horse to a tree-stump and listened attentively. Soon he heard the sweet voice singing again the same little song.

The Prince decided at once to ride to the hut in the woods, maybe the Goldspinnners could explain this strange occurrence. He mounted his horse and set out towards the solitary hut in the woods. When he arrived near the hut he stopped, hoping that one of the Goldspinnners might come out. In the early morning the eldest sister came out of the hut and went to the spring to wash her face. The Prince told her about the sad event of last year



and about the mysterious song at the bridge. The Crone being away on her journey the Prince was invited to enter the hut. It became clear to the sisters that the misfortune which happened was caused by the witch-ball of their mother and that their sister had not died, but by enchantment—turned into a flower. As they did not have a definite plan to save their sister they did not tell the Prince about their suspicions fearing to give him futile hopes.

In the evening the eldest sister brought a handful of magic herbs from the garret, rubbed them into powder, mixed it with flour into a dough and fried a cake for the Prince, which he had to eat before going to sleep. In the night the Prince had a strange dream; he dreamed that he lived in the woods among the birds and understood their language. In the morning when he told about his dream the eldest sister explained: "At a lucky hour you have come to our hut; at a lucky hour you had your dream! and it will really happen to you on your way home. The cake I gave you was mixed with magic herbs, which will give you the power to understand what the clever birds are telling each other. These little feathered-folk have much wisdom unknown to man. Listen attentively to what their little beaks chatter. When your mourning-days are over do not forget us poor



maids, who forever have to sit here like prisoners, behind a spinning-wheel."

The Prince bade farewell to the Goldspinners; thanked them for their hospitality and counsel and promised to release them upon his return.

Upon riding homewards the Prince found the woods strangely animated with the voices of singing and chattering birds. At first he could not understand anything from their talks which concerned the affairs of people unknown to him. Suddenly he discovered on the summit of a pine tree, a Magpie and a spotted Thrush, who seemed to be talking about him.

"Great is the dullness of the people," said the Thrush, "they cannot do even the easiest things in the right way. There floats in the river under the bridge the foster-daughter of the Lame Old Woman, now turned into a water-lily, sadly complaining of her ill-luck to all passers-by, and nobody comes to assist her. Only a few days ago her former bridegroom crossed the bridge; listened to the complaining song of the Maiden, but he was no wiser than the others; and yet it is an easy thing to rescue her; the famous Finnish Sorcerer has only to be solicited. He could easily release the Maiden from the bonds of the witchcraft."

The Prince was pondering over what the birds told him, when the call of Swallows reached his



ears. "Come, let us go to Finland, there is better nesting," called one Swallow to the other. "Let us go," agreed the other.

The Prince decided to use the Swallows as his messengers to the Finnish Sorcerer. He sent him his hearty greetings, begging him to tell him how it would be possible to restore to her human form a maiden changed into a water-lily. The Swallows promised to deliver the message and flew upon their way.

A week later the Prince was sitting in the palace garden, thinking that the Swallows must have forgotten to deliver his message, when he noticed an Eagle flying high over his head. Gradually the Eagle came lower and descended on a linden tree not far from the Prince.

"The old Finnish Sorcerer sends his greetings and asks you to forgive him for delay in his answer, but earlier there was no bird there coming this way. To remove the spell from the Maiden is a simple matter; the only thing you have to do is to go to the river, take off your clothes, smear your body all over with mud, so that no white spot is left upon you; then seize with your fingers the tip of your nose and call out: 'Man into crawfish!' and at once you will find yourself turned into a crawfish. Descend deep into the river, crawl without fear, under the roots of the lily, unwind them from



the mud and the weeds so that all parts will be loosened. Cling by your claw to one of the roots, then the water will lift you up to the surface together with the flower. Let the waves carry you forward until a bushy mountain-ash will become visible. Not far from it stands a stone of the size of a small hut. Here you have to sigh: 'Lily into Maiden, crawfish into man!' and it will all happen." Finishing these words the Eagle flew away.

More than a week had already passed and the Prince was still undecided whether or not to follow the instructions. One day he heard a Crow say: "The Old Sorcerer has never given false advice nor has the language of the birds ever deceived." This gave him new courage, for he knew that nothing worse than death could happen to him, and death was preferable to constant mourning. When he reached the river a sweet song again reached his ears:

Forced by Mother's Curse
 Here I have to lie in slumber
 Here the youthful child withers
 Fallen into waves' embraces
 And the bed of cold waters
 Guards the Maiden's quiet rest.

The Prince dismounted, tethered his horse so that it could not go far away, followed exactly the given instructions. Everything happened just as



it was foretold. When the Prince, in the form of a crawfish, reached the place where the big stone stood, near to the mountain-ash, the crawfish sighed: "Lily into maiden! Crawfish into man!" In an instant two human heads were floating on the surface of the water—one that of a man, the other that of a woman; the water rippled them to the shore, but they were naked, as God had made them.

The Maiden was ashamed of her nakedness and did not dare to come out of the water, but the Youth, closing his eyes, advised her to hide behind the mountain-ash, while he would hasten to the bridge, where he had left his clothes and his horse. But neither one nor the other was in the place he had left them. He did not know that his life as a crawfish had lasted for several days, it had seemed to him only a few hours.

Suddenly an elegant coach drawn by six horses was seen coming in his direction. In the coach he found clothes for himself and for the Maiden, also a man servant and a maid. He sent the maid with the clothes to assist the Maiden. In an hour they both were dressed in gorgeous bridal-robcs and immediately they drove away to the city, and straightways to the church door.

The King and Queen were sitting in the church mourning the loss of their son, whom they thought



to be drowned in the river, as his horse and clothes were found on the shore. Indescribable was the joy of the parents. The King himself led the pair to the altar where they were married with much ceremony. A dashing wedding feast followed, which lasted for six weeks.

In their happiness the Prince and his bride did not forget the Goldspinners. From the talk of a Magpie, in the palace garden, they learned that the Crone was not the mother of the girls, but a Witch, who had stolen them when babies from a far away country, and the Magpie continued: "The Woman's sins are great and she does not deserve mercy; boiled poison root would be the most suitable food for her, so that she could not harm anybody in the future."

Interpreting an impressive dream of his bride to mean that the Crone had left the hut and that the two sisters were alone, the Prince immediately led a detachment of his soldiers to the hidden hut! The Maidens hailed their rescuers with shouts of joy. One of the soldiers was ordered to pick the poison-root and to boil it into food for the old woman. Early the next morning, taking the Maidens with them they started upon their homeward way, and reached the city on the same evening. Great was the joy of the sisters over being reunited after their long separation!



The Crone came to her hut on the same night. Quickly she ate the food she found on the table and crept into her bed and was soon in a sleep, from which she never awoke again: the poison-root brought her wicked life to an end.

In a week the Prince sent a loyal officer to the place for investigation, he found the Crone dead. Fifty cart-loads of golden thread were found in the locked room and it was divided among the three sisters. The torch was soon set to the hut and it burned down to the very ground. When the fire's red comb appeared above the roof pole, a big cat with shiny eyes came down the wall. The soldiers caught the cat. A bird called from the top of a tree: "Put a clamp to the cat's tail, and she will disclose all secrets!"

"Do not torture me," begged the cat. "I am a human like you, only turned into a cat by witchcraft. I was the housekeeper of a rich King far, far away. The Crone was the Queen's chambermaid. In our greediness we agreed secretly to steal the three daughters of the King and his great treasures and to escape. The old woman turned into golden flax the golden utensils we stole. The eldest child was then three years old and the youngest only five months old. Afraid that I might become repentant and might change my mind, she changed me into a cat."



By the order of the officer who thought that the cat deserved no better end than the Crone, she was thrown into the flames.

The two other GoldspINNers, like their youngest sister, later married Kings' sons and the golden thread they had spun in the solitary hut in the woods, supplied them with rich dowries. But their birthplace, as well as their parents always remained unknown to them.



THE GIFT OF FATHER FROST

THE GIFT OF A FRIEND



THE GIFT OF FATHER FROST

UPON a gloomy night in the late fall somebody knocked at the door of a poor peasant.

“Good people, give me lodging for the night,” begged the stranger. “I come from afar and am very tired!”

When the peasant questioned him as to where he came from, the stranger said: “I am the youngest son of Father Frost, the master of the far North, where the Northern Lights continually flame in the skies.”

The peasant was not satisfied with this answer and asked whither he was going.

“Where am I going?” repeated the stranger. “I do not know myself. The whole summer I have slept at home, because I was angry with the hot sun who hindered me in my work. Now, when the autumn came, a desire arose in me to



travel, to see foreign lands and their peoples. Please let me in, I will be grateful for lodging. I am very tired after my long journey."

The peasant permitted him to come in and to stay overnight. He advised the stranger to climb into the bed-shelf above the stove, as it had become rather chilly in the room. He himself went to sleep in the next chamber.

When on the next morning the peasant entered the room, where he had left his guest, he felt that the room was as cold as a cellar and his teeth chattered. He wrapped himself carefully in his fur coat. In his excitement he looked around for his guest and to his amazement, he saw that though the stove was all covered with white frost, his guest was lying on it, bare and uncovered.

"Stranger! stranger! get up! Are you alive or has the frost killed you?" called the peasant anxiously. He had to call and call again before the stranger awoke.

"The room was so hot, that I could not even close my eyes during the night and only when it began to dawn, did I get a little sleep."

"The room too hot!" exclaimed the peasant, "the room is so cold that it makes my teeth chatter."

Outdoors everything was covered with a hard frost, and a deep sleet covered the ground.



Thanking his host for his hospitality and lodging, the stranger went on his way. The peasant wondered who the stranger could be.

In a few weeks another stranger happened to be passing the peasant's hut; he also begged for a night's lodging. He said:

"I am the second son of Father Frost, the master of the far North, the land where the Northern Lights flame always in the skies."

"Then you are he whose brother stayed here recently overnight, at the time we had our first frost of the year."

"My brother left home a few weeks ago, he must have paid you a visit.

"You ask me where I am going? I do not know myself. The whole summer I have slept at home and was angry with the hot sun because he would not let me do anything. Now, when winter came, a longing arose in me to travel, to visit foreign lands and foreign peoples. Please take me in, and for the lodging I shall be thankful."

The second stranger went to sleep in the bed-shelf above the stove, and the peasant himself went as usual into the other room.

On the following morning it was so cold in the room, that the logs in the wall cracked and the water was frozen in the barrel and the stove was covered with a deeper white frost than before,



nevertheless the guest was uncovered and soundly sleeping.

The peasant thought him to be frozen to death and did not even try to awake him, but went nearer and touched him with his hand to assure himself of his death. The stranger at once sprang up and began to rub his eyes.

"It was hot here to-night!" he said. "I could not even fall asleep and only at dawn did I close my eyes. That is why I was sleeping so late!"

"Still hot!" wondered the peasant. "It is so cold in here that the water is frozen and it broke my water-barrel! What a queer man you are to complain of the heat in such a cold, and to lie uncovered above the stove!"

"Did I then not tell you that I am the son of Father Frost?" said the traveler, and thanking the peasant for the lodging went on his way.

A few weeks later a third stranger passed along the same road and asked for permission to stay overnight. "You want to know who I am and where I go?" the stranger said, answering the inquiries of the peasant. "I am neither of noble birth nor of a humble one, I am the eldest son of Father Frost, the master of the far North. On account of heavy heat I had to sleep the whole summer, now however I want to go further to visit other lands and nations."



"So you are the eldest son of Father Frost!" exclaimed the peasant, "then get away, if you are he! For such men I have no place. I know your kind; your brothers have been here and have harmed me much. They promised to be grateful, but they were merely biting their thumbs at me! Neither mouth nor eye received anything from them. You will be no better than your brothers, therefore go away!"

The stranger insisted and pleaded and pleaded again to be taken in.

"You want to stay overnight, in order to cause me more damage by frost!" scolded the peasant.

"Forgive, dear friend, if my younger brothers have harmed you and have forgotten to be grateful. I, however, will be really thankful. If you do not want to let me into your room, allow me to go into the loft. I shall be contented with that!"

The peasant thought and thought before he said: "Well, if you will go up to the loft and will be satisfied there, then you may go and stay overnight."

The son of Father Frost went up to the loft, and the peasant—into his chamber.

In the morning, when the peasant awoke, the trees were all covered with ice and were snapping with frost. Outdoors it was so cold that it hurt



his teeth. The door to the loft however stood wide open and the stranger was lying uncovered.

The approach of the peasant awoke the stranger. "It was very pleasant indeed to sleep here to-night. The weather was so nice and cool, that one could sleep even without eating."

"So, so! was it not cold?" asked the surprised peasant again.

"This cold is nothing. You should see my father, then you could sing a song about the frost! Where he goes it is so cold that the birds fall dead when flying. During the summer my father flees from his home to find shelter in the place, where earth and heaven meet each other; in winter the old man likes better to sit at home, he does not care to go from home."

The son of Father Frost was now ready to go, and started off, but stopped suddenly and said: "Is that not strange? I came near forgetting to thank you, as my brothers did."

He opened his pack and took out of it two small sacks and gave them to the peasant with the words: "These two sacks will be your reward for having received us so kindly. The white sack is the cold-sack and the black one is the heat-sack. If in need of cold or heat only open the mouth of the sack a little. If you open the sack entirely—biting cold or suffocating heat will rush out."



The stranger went upon his way.

The peasant began to try out the sacks. He went into his hut and opened a little the black sack. At once it was hot in the room as if the stove had been red hot, and the peasant had to take off his fur coat.

An easy life now began for the peasant. The heat-sack heated his hut splendidly, and there was no more need to cut fire wood!

Early in the spring the peasant would take his heat-sack outdoors, and at once the snow melted quickly, everything began to grow and turn green. Once every day he went out and opened his heat-sack and the frost never harmed his small fields again and his crops grew better than ever before.

The village people were curious to know why the spring arrived earlier at the hut of the peasant than at theirs and why it was always so warm at his place. He would not tell them his secret, but they at last learned that he possessed a heat-sack.

These rumors reached the ears of the rich farmer upon whose land stood the hut of the peasant. His master asked the poor man: "Is it true you possess a heat-sack?"

The peasant could not deny it and said: "Yes I have it, honorable master."

"Then give me the sack, you do not need it. Go, bring it!" ordered the rich man.



The peasant went home, but had no idea of giving away his precious sack.

Winter came. "It is time to punish the wretched fellow for not obeying my order," thought the farmer and he went to the hut of the peasant and called: "Get out of the hut, the hut belongs to me!"

"Soon, soon, honorable master! Wait just a moment," replied the peasant. He brought out his cold-sack and opened it on the threshold. Immediately it became unbearably cold. The farmer was compelled to hurry away in order to save himself from freezing. After that he never dared to try to turn the peasant out of his hut.

It happened that the story about the magic heat-sack reached the richest farmer of the village. He came to bargain for the sack, promising to give for it as much gold as the sack could hold.

"What can I, poor man, do with the gold? The gold will not heat my room. Keep your gold, I will keep my sack," said the peasant. He would not give his sack away for any price.

The rich farmer left in a passion of anger.

In the night time he came back and stole the peasant's heat-sack and was much pleased with his success. At home he opened the sack wide. Scorching heat puffed into his face and it became as hot in the house as a kiln. Everybody hastened



to get out of the house—some with burned noses, some with burned hands, others with burned faces, even the animals, which were under the same roof, in the stable, were all burned to death; nobody could reach them and let them loose.

Worse than the calamity which had befallen the rich farmer was the fact that he had to bear the name of a thief, because he had stolen the sack.

Nobody dared to enter the house because he would get burned. There was nothing left for the rich farmer to do but to go to the poor man, to confess his sin, and ask his forgiveness and seek the peasant's help.

The poor man forgave him and helped him willingly. He took his cold-sack and went with the rich farmer. He had only to open his cold-sack when the unbearable heat moderated. Then the peasant got back his heat-sack. The farmer was happy too, as he could again enter his house, though the damage he had suffered was great. In punishment for his theft all his animals were suffocated by the heat.

At last the King of the land had heard about those strange sacks. But the owner of the sacks would not accept either the gold or the silver offered by the King in return. Then a wise thought came to the King's mind: he invited the owner of the sacks to come and live with him in his palace.



So the peasant became an important person. He ate and drank at the King's table and wore the King's garments. In return for this his only duty was to open his heat-sack once a day in the palace and in the palace gardens. Thus it was always warm in the palace, and the trees and bushes in the gardens were blooming all the year just as they do on Saint-John's day.

One day a message was brought to the King, that the enemy was in the land.

The King sent out a large army against the enemy, but it was vanquished. Then the King sent his bravest men with a larger army—but it met the same fate. The enemy was now not far from the royal city. In his alarm the King told the owner of the magic sacks of his distress.

"King, do not be afraid. Let the enemies come. Open the gates of the city. You, and your people go and hide somewhere! I shall meet them!" so the owner of the sacks consoled the troubled King.

The King gave his order that all the population of the city should gather in an underground refuge, which was dug in order that in case of severe need it would be possible to escape. Then the locks were removed from the gates and it was possible for the enemy to enter the city without any hindrance.

Soon the enemy appeared before the city and





THE KING TOLD THE PEASANT OF HIS DISTRESS

with shoutings of joy passed through the gates. In the whole city, to their surprise, they did not find a human being. They searched and searched—but all the people had vanished.

The victorious enemy began to celebrate its victory, to eat and drink and carouse; at last worn out by excessive rejoicing and feasting they all fell asleep.

The owner of the sacks had secretly watched



them all the time. When they were fast asleep, he said to himself: "Now is the time!"

He opened his cold-sack and threw it into the city. Then he joined the King and his people in his hiding-place and closed the entrance, which led from the underground passages.

On the next morning some of the city people ventured to go out of their hiding-places to see what had happened in the city. Scarcely had they poked out their heads but a chill blew into their faces and they had to retreat.

The owner of the sacks had to come to their aid. He opened his heat-sack a little and the cold instantly departed. Then he hastened to the cold-sack and closed it; and all the people came out of their retreat and went into the city to see what the enemy was doing. Nobody was seen. They looked and looked and saw at last: one here, another there, lying on the ground—dead; they all were frozen.

They entered their houses—but everywhere they found their dead enemies as if asleep.

Since that time no enemy has ever dared to attack the King. So the King and the peasant, the sack-owner, lived happily together to the end of their lives. After their death the cold- and the heat-sacks disappeared and nobody has ever seen them since.



STANDING SPONSOR



STANDING SPONSOR

AGES ago it happened that a cat and a mouse made friends.

“Let us gather our winter supplies,” suggested the cat.

The cat being the wealthier and quicker-witted, got an earthen pot and the mouse began to store up the fat.

Soon the pot was filled. The dog, however, had scented the fat in the air and began to sniff around for the fat-pot.

The mouse said to the cat: “My friend! Our fat-pot is in danger! We must take it to a safer place.”

“Very good, my friend; the dog is already after it!” replied the cat, and they carried the fat-pot to the church and hid it in the basement under the altar.

The following Sunday the cat said: “To-day I





"TO-DAY I AM TO STAND SPONSOR AT A CHRISTENING"

have been asked to stand sponsor at a christening and so I must go to church."

"Go if you must! But do not forget to have a look at our fat-pot," advised the mouse.

Later in the evening the mouse asked the name of the godchild.

"A-Little-Off," was the answer.

"A queer name indeed! Never in my life have I heard anything like it," squeaked the mouse.

The following Sunday the cat again went to church to stand sponsor.



"What name was given to your godchild to-day?" questioned the mouse, when the cat had returned from church.

"Half-Gone," she received in reply.

On the third Sunday the same thing came to pass. The godchild's name was "Some-Left;" on the fourth Sunday it was—"Bottom-Bare."

"Aha, friend, now I know what you meant by those names," cried the mouse. "The first time you ate a little of the fat, then a half; then some was still left and at last all my fat was gone! Our fat-pot you emptied, old friend! You deceiver! You thief!"

"You wretched creature! How dare you insult me!" screamed the cat. In an instant the cat caught the mouse and devoured it without pity.

From this time on no mouse has ever sought the friendship of a cat.



THE FOREST-FATHER



THE FOREST-FATHER

REYNARD visited, day after day, the poultry-house of a farm-wife; one day he stole a young cock, on the other he killed a hen. The wife complained to the Farmer, and asked him what to do.

The Farmer promised to help; he took his gun, called his dog and went to the woods to find the guilty one. He went to Reynard's den and sent his dog to drive him out. The dog went in and before long Reynard peeped out of the hole and ran into the woods. The Farmer lifted his gun to his eye, aimed, the shot was heard, and poor Reynard stretched his paws toward the sky.

The Farmer picked up his booty and was ready to go home, when he saw a flock of grouse not far off. Again he prepared to shoot, but he thought: "What shall I shoot them for! The little ones



are still young, let them grow! I can get them later, if I wish."

And the Farmer went on. Hardly had he taken a few steps when his eyes fell upon a wounded wood-cock, under a bush; the bird's wing was hurt and therefore it could not fly. It would be an easy task to add the bird to his booty, but again the Farmer thought: "What shall I shoot the wounded bird for! Let it get well! I can get it later, if I wish!"

He left the bird in peace and went on. Suddenly a queer animal ran by; he looked, but could not tell what it was; he went nearer, but the animal had disappeared; the Farmer's dog was gone too.

The Farmer hastened to get home. He strode and strode and strode—the place seemed unknown to him. However he continued to go on but soon he found himself only deeper in a thick forest. He was lost! Then he looked around for a higher place, climbed up the highest spruce-tree to see if his home was not in sight, but there was only forest and endless forest on all sides.

It soon was getting dark. The Farmer did not know what to do, and troubled sat on a tree stump to think.

"If only my dog were here!" sighed the man. "It would be much better and I would not feel so lonely in this unknown place!"



Then, of a sudden, something like a light was flashing from behind the trees. He got up and went in the direction of the light. Again he strode and strode. A queer looking house stood before him! Long, very long moss was growing on the walls and on the roof of the house! He gazed in bewilderment when the door of the house opened and an aged man, wearing a high hat of birch-bark, and with a floating beard of tree-moss, looked out.

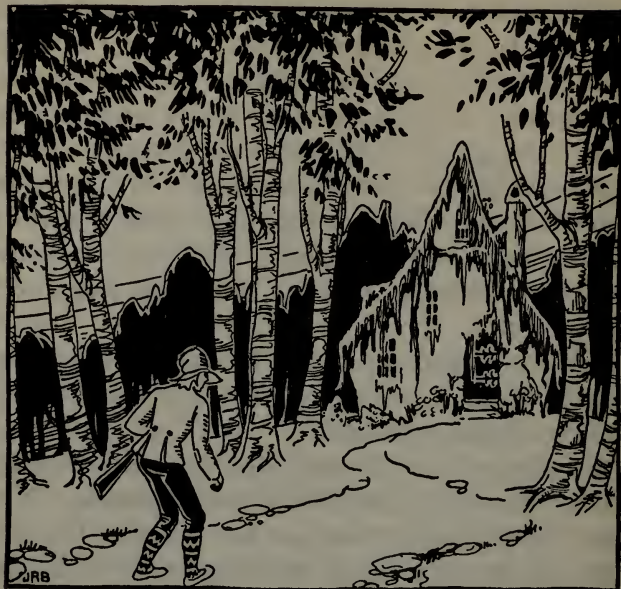
"Do not fear, my Son," he said encouraging him. "Come in! You have lost your way. Come and be my guest to-day!"

Frightened, the Farmer entered the queer house. At the fireside an Old Mother was spinning. Not flax, but bark-fibre was on her distaff. On the loom he saw the finest weaving made of birch-bark!

The Farmer admired the strange work, when his host said: "Sit down and take some rest! To-day you have wandered enough. Stay here overnight. You pitied my young grouse and the wounded wood-cock, therefore I shall be grateful to you. You put an end to the life of Reynard, but this does not matter, as he always has been the arch-enemy of the young birds, and therefore he deserves this punishment tenfold."

In the meantime the Old Mother had set the





A QUEER LOOKING HOUSE STOOD BEFORE HIM

table and the Farmer was invited to it. But see! On the table was nothing but apples, blackberries and strawberries, raspberries and cloudberrries and next to them a large can of birch-bark with some drink. All he saw here seemed so queer that the Farmer forgot to eat.

“Eat, eat!” invited his hostess. “We live here far in the woods; there is nothing we could offer you except apples and berries. But when you get



used to them, you find it possible to live on them, as well as on meat and bread."

Following the kind invitation, the Farmer began to eat; he took apples and some berries and drank from the can. In the can was nothing else but the purest and the sweetest birch-sap. When they had finished the evening meal the Farmer felt as if he had had a heavy supper.

Then bedding for him was spread out on the floor in the corner; he found everything made of birch-bark, but it was soft as down and it was pleasant to rest there.

In the morning his host said: "I am afraid you will not find your way out of the wood and might get lost again. I would better accompany you."

Saying these words he put on a coat of birch-bark, on his feet shoes of bark and took his birch-bark hat. Dressed in this strange way he could more easily be taken for a tree than for a man.

The Farmer thanked his hostess for her hospitality and bade Forest-Mother good-bye. At parting she gave him a box out of birch-bark to take home for his wife.

Then they started to go.

Though his guide appeared to be old, he walked so swiftly that the Farmer could not keep up with him even when he was half-running, and begged



him several times to walk more slowly. "That is nothing!" was the laughing answer. "You should see me when I walk quickly!"

When the two men had reached the borders of the forest, the Forest-Father remarked: "From here you may go home alone; now it is impossible to get lost!"

The Farmer begged that the friendly Forest-Father would visit his home and be his guest for the rest of the day, but the Forest-Father shook his head and said: "No! Here is the end of my boundary and on the other side of it I have nothing to do! Soon it will be noon and the Old Mother will be waiting for me!"

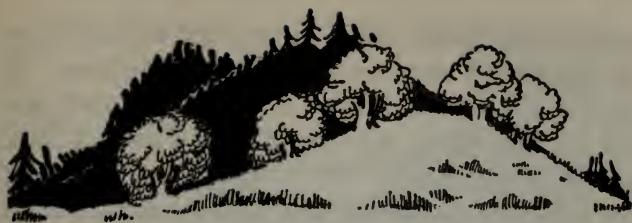
And the Forest-Father was gone.

At home the Farmer gave the bark-box, the gift of the Forest-Mother, to his wife. "That a gift!" she exclaimed contemptuously and threw it out of the window.

On the place where the bark-box had fallen three apple-trees began to grow and grew so quickly that on the following year they were full of sweet and delicious apples.



THE CREATION OF THE WOLF



THE CREATION OF THE WOLF

WHEN Vanaisa had created the earth and everything on it, he asked the Evil Spirit: "What do you think of my work, is it worthy of praise? Maybe you think some useful animal or some important plant is lacking? Maybe it seems to you that the mountains are not high enough and waters not deep enough?"

This friendly question pleased the Evil Spirit immensely and gathering all his courage he said: "Your work is not to be blamed, but there ought to be one animal more, who could protect the forests against the naughty shepherd-boys, who so often break the branches and peel the trees, and against the hares and goats who like to destroy the young shoots."

"Have I then not, for this purpose, put in the woods the Old Bear and the Creeping Snake?" replied Vanaisa greatly surprised.

"Yes, you have, but when winter comes those



guards fall asleep, and I always get so sad to see the forests left unprotected like poor orphans. If permitted I should like to create this needed animal myself. Only, one favor must I ask. I have not the power to give life to the thing I create, if you will give me such a magic word, my creation will not be worse than yours!"

"Yes, that I promise you. When your animal shall be finished, mouth and eyes put in their right places, then say: 'Get up, and devour the Evil Spirit.'"

"The devouring will not be some time yet," thought the Evil Spirit and he disappeared into the depths of the woods. There he gathered stones, twigs and moss. Then he brought from the village blacksmith two fiery sparks and many nails, and in the darkness of the night he started his work.

For the backbone he used a strong hedge-pole; for the head—a tree stump; he made the body of bricks and twigs, and a fern was used for the tail, and alder-sticks for the feet. In the place of the heart he put a stone. Then the body was covered with moss, the fiery sparks put in for eyes and iron nails for claws and teeth.

The Evil Spirit was satisfied on observing his work and gave the creature the name—"Wolf." But the Wolf had not as yet the breath of life. His master bethought himself of the instructions of





THE WOLF SPRANG UP AND CHASED THE EVIL SPIRIT

Vanaisa, and said: "Wolf, get up and devour ——" but before he could finish the words the Wolf sprang up!

The Evil Spirit was frightened, but soon recovered himself, and was ready to proceed with his evil doings. He said to the Wolf: "Wolf, get up and devour—Vanaisa."

But nothing happened; the Wolf did not move as much as the tip of his tail, though the order of the Evil Spirit was repeated many times.



Then the Evil Spirit went back to Vanaisa and complained that the magic words were not the right ones and that the Wolf would not move.

"No? Did you say: 'Get up and eat the Evil Spirit?'"

Not expecting such a question and ashamed of his lie, without saying a word the Evil Spirit went back to his created figure and gave the right order but in a very low voice.

And see, what happened then! The Wolf became alive, sprang up and chased the Evil Spirit, running like the wind, and he would have caught and devoured him if he had not hidden himself under a large stone.

From this time on, the Wolf became the fiercest enemy of the Evil Spirit. His backbone is immovable like a pole without joints; his teeth and claws are as sharp as iron nails; his eyes glitter like fiery sparks and his skin is covered with a thick fur; but his heart is still made of stone, when without pity, he steals and devours the poor innocent lambs.

When in the fall you happen to see in the forest the wolf's burning eyes, you must know that he is searching for his arch-enemy, the Evil Spirit.



THE GOLDMAKERS



THE GOLDMAKERS

ON a night of a heavy snow-storm, between Christmas and New Year's, a Traveler lost his way. Pushing ahead through the deep snow-drifts he became almost exhausted and thanked his luck, when at last he found a shelter from the storm under a big juniper bush.

He intended to stay there overnight, hoping to find his way in the morning. He wrapped himself, like a hedgehog, in his fur-coat, and soon fell asleep. He did not know how long he had slept, when he felt that somebody was shaking him and a voice calling: "Stranger, get up! Or the snow-storm will bury you and you may never get out!"

The man raised his head, opened his sleepy eyes and saw before him a tall man with a young pine tree, twice his size, as a staff in his hand. "Come



with me," said the Pine-Tree-Staff-Man. "We have a bonfire in the woods, it is better to rest there than here in the open."

The Traveler did not decline such a courteous invitation; he got up and went with the Pine-Tree-Staff-Man. The snow-storm was so furious, that it was impossible to see further than three paces ahead, but when the Stranger raised his staff and called: "Stop there, Snow-Storm-Mother! Give way!" there at once appeared in front of them a quiet wide roadway, where no snow was falling, while on both sides of them an angry snow-storm was raging, but the two men did not notice it. It seemed as if an invisible wall was holding back the snow from both sides of the roadway.

Some time had passed before the men reached the woods, and from far off they had seen the glow of the fire. "What is your name?" asked the Pine-Tree-Staff-Man.

"Tall-Hans's-Son-Hans," was the answer.

Around the fire there sat three men, clad in white linen garments, as if it were midsummer. Thirty or more paces from the fire it looked as if it really was summer: the moss was dry, green leaves and plants were growing around; ants and bugs were roaming on the lawn; though at the same time Tall-Hans's-Son-Hans could hear the roaring of the storm and the falling of the snow.



More strange was the fire itself—though it shone very brightly, it did not give off any smoke. “Do you not think, Tall-Hans’s-Son, that this is a better place to rest than under the juniper bush in the open?” Hans had to agree that it really was better there, and thanked his guide for bringing him to this place. Then he took off his fur-coat, rolled it up and put it as a pillow under his head and laid himself down by the fire.

The Pine-Tree-Staff-Man got his flask from under a tree and offered Hans a drink; the drink was unusually good and gave Hans a feeling of happiness. The Pine-Tree-Staff-Man also laid himself down, and as Hans did not understand the language in which the man was talking to his three companions, Hans soon fell asleep.

The next morning, when Hans awoke, he found himself in an unknown place, where neither woods nor fire were seen. Rubbing his eyes and recollecting what he had seen the night before, Hans concluded that it must all have been a dream, but he could not explain to himself how he came here.

From afar a heavy noise reached his ears and he felt as if the ground under him was trembling. Hans listened for a while in the direction from which the noise came and decided to trace it, in the hope of finding some people there. Soon he came



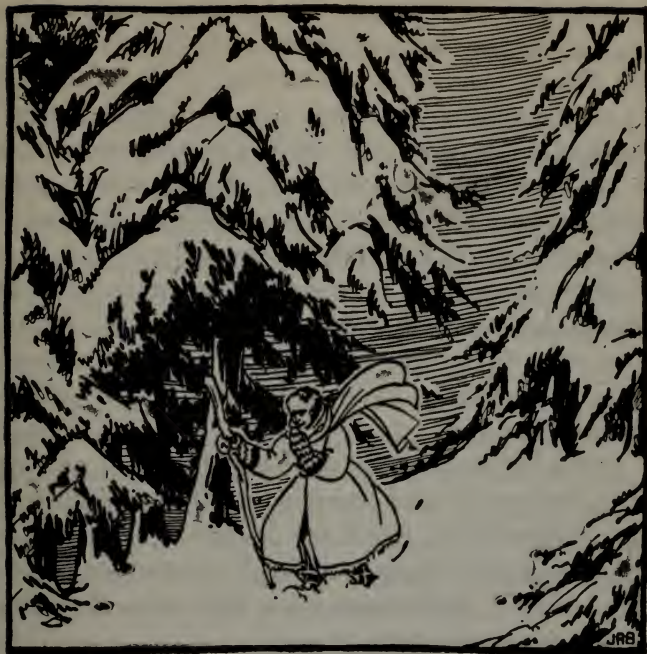
to an entrance of a cave, from which came the noise he had heard, and a feeble glow of light was seen. Hans entered the cave and found himself in an immense blacksmith-shop, with many bellows and anvils and with seven workmen at each anvil.

Queerer blacksmiths could not be imagined! They were about knee-high men, but their heads were larger than their bodies, and the hammers they held in their hands were twice the size of themselves. With these hammers the little fellows were dealing heavy blows on the anvils, which stronger and powerful men could not do. The little blacksmiths had nothing on, except long leathern aprons which covered their fronts, while their backs were as naked as Mother Nature had made them.

Near to the back wall Hans noticed the Pine-Tree-Staff-Man, who sat on a tall tree trunk and who was attentively watching the work of the little men. At his feet stood a high wooden can, from which the little workers drank from time to time.

The Pine-Tree-Staff-Man—who turned out to be the Master of the blacksmiths—was not clad in the white garments he had worn the night before, but in dark, dust-covered clothes, and had on a leathern girdle with a huge clasp; the high Pine-Tree-Staff was still in his hand and with it he made, now and then, some signs to his men, because above the





AT LAST HE FOUND A SHELTER FROM THE STORM

loud noise and the constant vibration no talk could be heard.

Hans could not determine if anybody had noticed him or not, as the Master and his men were all working hard, seeming to pay no attention to the intruder.

Some hours later the little men got rest, when



the bellows were stopped and the heavy hammers thrown down. Now, when the workers were gone, the Master arose from his seat and motioned Hans to come nearer. "I saw you coming," he remarked, "but the hasty work did not permit me to talk to you earlier. Be my guest for to-day, you will see my life and my household. Entertain yourself here till I change my working clothes."

With these words he took a key from his pocket, opened a door in the back wall and invited Hans to enter. What marvelous treasures were stored here! Mountains of gold and silver bars were piled all around!

Hans began to count the bars of gold in one of the piles and he had counted exactly five hundred and seventy bars, when the Master returned and said smilingly: "Stop counting! It would take too much time! Better take a few bars from the pile, I wish to present them to you."

Hans did not wait to be asked twice—he grasped with both hands a bar of gold, but—he could not even move it!

The Master laughed and said: "You feeble flea, you cannot take with you even the smallest gift I offer, and therefore you have to be satisfied with only looking at it." Talking thus he led Hans to the second, then to the third and to the fourth room, till they reached the seventh room, which was of



the size of a church, and like all the others was stored from floor to the ceiling with gold and silver bars.

Hans was dazzled and stood amazed before the endless treasures, sufficient to buy all the kingdoms of the world! And here they lay unused!

He asked his host: "Why are you storing these fortunes here, where nobody can profit by them? If you plan to divide them among the people of the world, all men would become rich, and there would be no need for work in the world."

"That is why I cannot give these treasures to mankind, as all the world would perish of idleness. If man had no need to work he would soon die. Man is intended to toil, in order to feed himself."

Hans did not agree with this explanation and argued boldly against the opinions of his host. Then he asked him to explain of what use was all the gold and silver stored there only to tarnish, and why, though he had more than enough, was he tirelessly storing more and more treasure.

The Master of the gold said: "I am not a man, though I have a human figure and a human face. I am a higher being, whom Vanaisa has assigned to rule the world and keep order in it. By the wish of Vanaisa, I and my helpers have to make gold and silver here underground; every year a small portion of it is given out for the use of men, exactly



as much as they need for their use. We break the gold into small pieces; mix it with soil, clay and sand, so that the men have to find it by chance and must dig for it with much work. But, my friend, we must bring our talk to an end, for it is meal time. If you still want to look at my treasures, stay here, delight your heart with the sight of the glittering gold, till I come to lead you to the table." And he left Hans alone.

Hans walked from room to room, tried to lift some smaller bars of gold, but again he did not succeed. Though he had often heard from cleverer men how heavy gold was, he never believed it, until he experienced it himself.

When the Master of the gold returned, he was so transformed that Hans, at first sight, did not recognize him. Now he wore a bright flame-colored silken garment, which was richly adorned with gold; a palm-wide golden belt was around his waist and on his head he had a glittering golden crown, with precious stones sparkling in it like the stars in a winter sky! Instead of his former Pine-Tree-Staff, he held in his hand a small wand of purest gold which bore branches and pine-needles, and it looked like a child of the big Pine-Tree-Staff.

When the Master of all this royal wealth had closed and locked the doors of the gold chambers,



he put the keys into his pocket, took Hans by the hand and led him out of the smithy into another room, where a fine meal was served them.

All the tables and the chairs were of silver! In the middle of the room stood a gorgeous table, with one silver chair on opposite sides. The plates, pitchers, cups and glasses were golden! When the two men had seated themselves at the table, twelve choicest dishes were served. The servants looked like the little blacksmiths Hans had seen before, only now they were clad in white clothes and did not appear naked as when they were blacksmiths.

The swiftness and the skilfulness of the little men amazed Hans, and though they did not possess wings, the quickness of their movements was such as if they were flying. As they were not as high as the table, they had to jump on the table every time like fleas. Carrying in their hands big plates and dishes, filled to the brim with food, the little men handled them with such skill that not a drop was spilled. Between courses they filled the cups of the diners with mead and rare wines.

The host conversed with Hans in a friendly manner and entrusted him with some secrets. He said, when their conversation turned to the night of the snow-storm: "Between Christmas and New Year's, I often wander on the earth. I wish to become acquainted with some human beings and to see



how they live. But, from what I have learned about men I cannot praise them much. Most of them are living to spite and to harm each other. They are all, more or less, complaining of their brother-men; nobody sees his own faults, but ascribes all his misfortunes, which he has heaped upon his own head, to the misdoings of others."

Hans tried to disprove this, as well as he could, but the hospitable Master of the gold had ordered the servants to pour more and more of the good wine into the cup of his guest, so that Hans' tongue became heavy and unruly and at last he could not understand what was said to him.

By and by Hans was asleep. In the weariness of his confused head he had a strange and motley dream, in which piles of gold were incessantly before his eyes. In his dream he was much stronger, and was carrying with ease, a pair of golden bars, and getting tired he was compelled to sit down and rest, when he heard strange voices, which he thought were the voices of the little blacksmiths.

Half opening his eyelids he saw a green forest around, and blooming grass under him. The sun was shining gaily and threw its warm rays into his eyes. It took some time for Hans to free himself from the bonds of sleep and to recall what had happened to him.

By and by his memory returned, but the recol-



lected happenings seemed strange and did not agree with the created order of the world, as he knew it.

Hans recalled how, upon a stormy night, a few days after Christmas, he had lost his way in the woods, and everything that had happened later. He had slept in the company of unknown men by a fireside; on the following day, he had been the guest of the Pine-Tree-Staff-Man; he had dined with him and had drunk much of the wonderful wine—but surely this was a few days ago only! Now full summer reigned around him! Some mysterious charm must be in all this!

Arising from the ground Hans saw the place where the bonfire had been! The cinders glittered in the sun in a strange way. Examining the place more closely Hans saw that the supposed ash-heap was of fine silverdust and that the brand bars were of pure gold.

What luck! Where to get a bag to take it home? Need is the best teacher. Hans took off his winter fur-coat, swept all the silver ashes together, not a grain of dust was ignored by him, put the silver dust and all the gold fire brands on his fur-coat, made it into a bundle, and bound it with his belt, so that nothing could fall out. The load did not look large, but it was heavy enough and Hans had



to use all his strength to carry it to a safe place and hide it.

By a happy chance Hans had become a rich man, and was now able to buy himself an estate. He, however, preferred to leave this part of the country and to move to another, where nobody would know him. There with a portion of his wealth he bought a beautiful manor, then he married a good girl and they lived happily to the end of their lives.



THE SEA-WEDDING



THE SEA-WEDDING

THIS true story happened long, long ago—in those ancient times when fish were so plentiful around the eastern shores of the Baltic Sea that the forefathers of the Liivish fishermen caught them with their primitive nets more easily and in greater numbers than they do in these days. For in those days there was no lighthouse in Kuolka, nor steamers on the sea whose noise and movement now frighten all the fish away. The constant storms of our days, which sink and wreck the frail boats and tear the nets, were then quite unknown.

How beautiful and peaceful was life in those old days! Fine Spring days and warm Autumn nights protected their fishing. With deepest veneration the fishermen worshipped the Sea-Mother in their prayers and brought to her their humble offerings



and so the Sea-Mother chose their shore for her dwelling place. Here in the lap of the waves she built her palace and lived in undisturbed peace, protecting the fishermen and providing them with fish in plenty.

An old fisherman from a village on the Liivish seacoast once had the great luck to see with his own eyes the wonderful palace of the Sea-Mother!

One Sunday evening, late in the Summer a strange calm reigned over the sea. It was smooth like a mirror and not even the slightest ripple disturbed its still surface. Although it was Sunday, two old fishermen agreed to go fishing that night, for they were short of fish. They pushed their boat into the water not far from the place where a small brook flowed into the sea. Just here, so it was said, in former times there stood a church, until one day suddenly it had vanished and sunk into the sea. The people of the neighborhood still believe that the ringing of the church-bells, rising from the sea, can be heard at times.

The two men rowed out, spread their nets and prayed to the Sea-Mother for her blessing. They prepared to cast their anchor but it could not reach the bottom so they fastened a long rope to it and it sank down quickly. It settled just in the spot where the bells of the vanished church lay and it struck the bells with a loud clang.



The men filled their pipes, lit them and sat down to smoke.

All of a sudden an unusual light appeared glimmering over the sea, not like the light which the seamen know well, foretelling a storm, but one they had never seen before. As they watched it, a strange feeling came over the fishermen; their hearts were filled with a religious feeling such as one has on a calm Sunday morning when going to church. The two men were known as good workers, being always the first out on the sea and the last to return to the shore, but on this day because it was Sunday, they did not enjoy their work. After a while they lay down in the boat to rest. One of them had slept very little the previous night and soon began to snore, but the other lay in the back of the boat thinking and watching. He was an old, one-eyed man, called Michael, and he had his beloved harp with him. While his companion slept Michael played on his harp, the merry as well as the sad melodies of the fishermen, and so beautifully did he play, that even the sea seemed to be listening sadly or joyfully according to his tunes. When his music ceased, the sea grew still, so still that the boat did not move at all.

Then suddenly the cool black sea rippled slightly and Michael saw, not far from his boat, a pretty head rising from the water; then a neck and





HE COULD SEE CLEARLY THE BEAUTY OF HER FACE

body appeared, until the whole image of a woman became visible. Dusk had descended rapidly and it was almost dark, but the image shone strangely and Michael could see clearly the unusual beauty of her face. Her long curly fair hair was adorned with the finest amber and pearls and jewels; clearly he saw her green flowing robes of seaweed, and her white apron embroidered with red; and



her apron was whiter than the most costly sails ever seen on the world's waters.

This sight startled the harp-player and he prepared to call to his slumbering companion, when the beliefs of the seamen came to his mind—that on the sea you never must show your companions what you see yourself and what the sea shows you, or great misfortune would befall you, so Michael kept still.

The wonderful woman approached the boat, smilingly nodded to Michael and in a voice sweet as a flute, she bade him not to fear her since she was the Sea-Mother herself, who rocked the fishermen when they were children on the waves and sent good luck to those of them who prayed to her and worshipped her with offerings. This day she was celebrating the wedding of her daughter with the Son of the Sun in the water-realm. But when they returned home after the wedding ceremony they could not enter the palace, for the anchor of Michael and his companion had fallen upon the threshold and blocked the entrance.

“Be kind and follow me to my water-palace, lift up your anchor and then stay and play your harp at my daughter's wedding,” begged the Sea-Mother.

Michael did not hesitate a minute for he trusted the Sea-Mother completely, but the one thing that



troubled him was how to get there. The Sea-Mother smiled, took him by his hand, covered his face with her apron and helped him out of the boat. The waters opened before them and they descended easily to the bottom of the sea.

When the apron was lifted from his face, Michael was blinded at first and dazed by what he saw. One of the Sea-Maidens brought some water and a towel, and washed his face and rubbed his temples until he recovered and opened his eyes and was able to look around again.

What a miracle he saw! What wonders greeted his eyes!

For before him lay the fantastic palace! It was made of glass, diamonds, pearls, beads and shells and of other marvelous materials not known on the earth! The walls were transparent like glass; the golden towers and gates glittered brilliantly and the crystal windows sparkled in their frames of precious pearls. Before the palace the wedding-procession stood waiting; all the inhabitants of the water-realm seemed to be represented. Here were fishes and animals; mer-men and mer-maids and ugly sea monsters!

Before the gates stood a glittering chariot made of the prettiest sea-shells, with flashing wheels made of fish scales! In the coach sat the bride and the bridegroom with sparkling crowns on their



heads. The coach was drawn by giant fishes, the loveliest fishes of the sea, assisted in their task by sea-pigs and sea-bulls. The guests, different in color and shape, and riding on the backs of the biggest fishes, surrounded the coach.

And true enough there at the entrance to the palace lay indeed an old, rusty anchor; Michael recognized it at once and hastened to remove it without delay. Then the Sea-Mother opened the door with a diamond key and the procession entered the palace. Michael was invited to join the others. Later, when he spoke of his adventure, he could find no words to describe the dazzling splendor of the marvelous palace of the Sea-Mother.

On the wedding-table, among the rare and dainty dishes and the exquisite beverages not even the simple, home-brewed beer of the coast-people was missing but was there served in transparent amber tankards.

The bride and the bridegroom asked Michael to play his harp for them, and to play as beautifully as he had played in his boat, when he thought that no one was listening or watching. Michael played willingly, for that a musician of the Liivish fishermen should play his harp at the wedding of the Sea-Mother's daughter was unheard of! All the sea-people seemed to enjoy his playing greatly. The Sea-Mother herself was very kind to him and



spoke to him encouragingly; she told him of her three royal sons, who ruled the waters, one near the Islands, the other near Finland, the third somewhere far, far away. But here, on the Liivish coast, she herself ruled the sea.

At midnight the sparkling crown was lifted from the bride's head and she began to distribute from an open present-chest gifts of remembrance to the guests. With generous hand she gave the most beautiful shirts, stockings, gloves, and other fine handiwork which she herself had made in the long winter nights. Not even Michael, the harp-player was forgotten; for coming to play his enchanting tunes at her wedding, she gave him a towel so beautiful and so skilfully worked the like of which no earthly maiden could ever make. It was whiter than the midwinter snow, embroidered with red, with red fringes; the Sea-Mother's daughter herself wound it around Michael's harp; who bowed low before her as he received the gift.

Thereupon the Sea-Mother led him out and as before, she covered his eyes with her apron and took him back to his boat. Here she bade him farewell and asked him, in her silvery voice but in tones of great sadness to tell the people of the coast that now she must depart from their waters and choose her dwelling elsewhere, for many armed foreign warriors, speaking strange tongues,





BEFORE HIM LAY THE FANTASTIC PALACE

had come to these shores. They plundered with fire and sword the people of her coast and with them came noisy, troublesome boats to disturb and muddle the waters; their constant vibration and roaring gave her no rest, no, not even in her palace. Great storms, bad times, poor fishing and other misfortunes would come when she departed, but some day—thus promised the Sea-Mother—she would come back to her own Liivish people, to calm the storms, and bless their lives and bring back their lost happiness.

Thus spoke the silvery voice of the Sea-Mother; she nodded kindly and slowly, very slowly sank back into the waves.

For a while Michael gazed after her, staring.

Was it a dream? Or just a vision?

No, it could not be a dream, neither could it be a vision, for the towel around his harp assured him that it was real. He turned to his companion, but he still slumbered in the boat—so quickly had all this happened there, far down, in the water-realm. Michael lingered, until the rising dawn began to glow purple in the east. Then he awakened his companion and together they began to pull out their nets. And what a catch it was! Their nets were overflowing with fish! Michael's companion stood quite overcome with amazement. It seemed that the load would be too heavy for their old, frail



boat, but at last, though with great difficulty, they reached land.

On the shore, after the work was done, old Michael related the story of his wonderful experience on the sea to his companion who, struck with wonder, marveled greatly. He could not understand how it could have been possible that Michael in so short a time had attended the Sea-Wedding and had seen and conversed with the Sea-Mother in her palace. But then he saw the wonderful towel around the harp and he believed that Michael was telling the truth.

Hardly had Michael finished his tale when all of a sudden, the sad, quiet sea grew rough, the wind began to sigh strangely and a storm rushed over the land, lashing the sea to fury and casting the foamy waves on the shore, like huge rocks.

Yes, indeed, the Sea-Mother was departing from these waters.

Michael removed his cap and stood with deep reverence, bowing towards the sea and waving his hat in a sorrowful farewell.

From that time on, devastating storms, rough seas and poor fishing became the lot of the Liivish fishermen and thus it has been to the present time. Only old Michael, the harp-player, had exceptional luck in his fishing to the end of his days. He liked to tell his story over and over again to



his grandchildren in the long winter evenings, while his old, feeble hands moved slowly, mending the nets. The towel, the gift of the Sea-Mother's daughter, proved the truth of his story to all who would not believe.

And, indeed, what a queer towel it was! It neither wore out, nor could it be soiled, though it was used constantly. Many cripples and sick did it heal and it became a custom at all weddings in the neighborhood to bind this towel around the gift-chest of the bride, when the chest arrived at the bridegroom's house, and then all prayed, asking for the blessing of the Sea-Mother.

Long, long afterwards, this strange towel, the last gift of the Sea-Mother to her beloved Liivish people was lost without leaving any trace and was never seen again.



**THE WONDER-DOCTOR AND
HIS SERVANT**



THE WONDER-DOCTOR AND HIS SERVANT

IN olden times there lived a poor peasant, who craved to become rich.

He had, however, no idea how to bring this about. One day he heard a preacher say in his sermon: whatever you give to the poor will be returned to you tenfold. Straightway the peasant decided to give away everything he had to the poor.

He sold all his meagre possessions and the money he got he distributed among the poor. Then he waited impatiently for the time when he would get it back tenfold. He waited and waited—but nothing came! He had nothing to eat and hunger oppressed him more and more. Filled with anger against himself and everybody else, he went into the woods and lay down under a tree.



Suddenly a stranger appeared before him and asked: "Why do you lie here idle?"

"What can I do in my need? I am hungry; for three whole days have I had no food. A fool that I was, I gave everything to the poor in the hope of getting it back tenfold. And now I am starving—that is all the reward for my kindness."

"'Sleep never gives a new coat nor a long shirt,' says a proverb. If you had worked, you would not be starving. Just now I have no bread with me. But take this sack, it will provide you with everything you wish to have in it," said the stranger kindly and vanished.

The peasant hung the sack around his neck and wished to test the stranger's words. He thought: "I wish my sack were full of gold!"

Scarcely had he uttered his wish, when the sack grew heavy and almost dragged him to the ground. He peeped into it and oh, joy! Gold! Pure gold to the very brim! The peasant wished to skip about, so happy was he, but the heavy sack hindered him and he sat down. He pondered over what he would do now he had become rich.

"I shall buy myself a manor and live there like a baron. I will eat pork three times a day and will sleep between two fur-coats! Oh, what a happy life it will be! How true it is that gifts to the poor



are returned tenfold! For my part—I am rewarded thousands of times.”

The peasant would have dreamed thus for weeks had he not been so hungry.

Again he tugged and strained but could not lift up the sack. And not a soul was seen around who could help him. Should he hide the sack in the woods? No! Never! Somebody might find it! He thought and thought but not an idea came into his mind.

Thus he spent the night and the following day in the woods on the same spot. He preferred to die by the side of his gold than to be separated from it.

On the third day the stranger returned.

“Help, father, help! I am dying!”

“What is your trouble now? Did I not give you the magic sack which would fulfill all your wishes?”

“True enough, you gave it to me, but the sack of gold is so heavy now that I cannot move it at all. So here I must starve.”

“Why were you so greedy and asked only for gold! Well, once more I will help you. Here is a piece of bread, take it and eat!”

The peasant ate the bread gratefully. In the meantime the stranger took the gold-sack upon his back as easily as if it were filled with down, and said:



"I see you are unable to shift for yourself. You would better enter my service. At least you will never be starving again."

The stranger set out and the peasant, munching his bread, strode behind. Soon they arrived at a river and quick as lightning the stranger poured the sackful of gold into the water, and handed the empty sack to his new servant.

"What have you done! You must be mad to pour the gold into the river!" exclaimed the peasant, and he jumped after it into the water. But it was too late. All the gold had disappeared.

With sighs and groans the servant followed his master upon his wanderings. One evening they came to a city where they stayed the night. Here they learned that the son of a rich merchant was dangerously ill and that no doctor could help him. A barrel of gold was promised to whoever could cure him. Thousands of doctors had tried and failed and all were driven from the merchant's house with a whip.

Next morning master and servant went to the merchant's house and offered to cure the youth.

"Begone!" cried out the merchant in annoyance, "thousands have cheated me! You are no better!"

But when the stranger insisted, the merchant at last gave his consent. Straightway the master



started with the cure. A trough was brought in; the master took a sharp knife and a bottle of medicine out of his bag; he cut open the patient's side and said:

"It is necessary to cut out the disease."

Trembling with fear, the servant washed the wound, while his master himself sewed it up. Then he was bidden to dress the body.

"Of what use is it to dress the body? The poor lad is dead as a door-nail and he who is dead will remain dead," thought the servant to himself.

Next the doctor took a bottle from his pocket and poured a drop of medicine into the youth's mouth. A tremor went through the dead body of the youth and his pale cheeks grew pink. At the second drop he moved and opened his eyes. At the third drop the youth was on his feet and said:

"It seems I have slept too long to-day."

"Do you still feel pain in your bones?" asked the wonder-doctor.

"Not in the least, I am perfectly well."

Three hours later the merchant came and stood speechless with amazement when his son met him at the door, looking as well as a fish in water.

The happy father offered lavish gifts as a reward for the healing. And though the servant whispered eagerly into the ears of his master: "Take it!





"YOU WOULD BETTER ENTER MY SERVICE"

Take it! It is gold he offers!" the wonder-doctor refused to accept any reward, saying:

"We do not want anything! God gives us all we need. But if you give us something to eat we shall be grateful."

After the meal, the wonder-doctor and his servant went on their way again. After they had covered a good many miles the servant began to complain of being hungry. They noticed a flock of



sheep grazing in the woods by the roadside. No dwelling was in sight.

The servant declared: "I shall go and kill a lamb, roast it and thus appease my hunger."

"Take one if you wish. But do not eat it before I return. I shall go to speak to the owner of the sheep or to the herd-boys about it."

The lamb was killed, a bonfire made, the meat roasted but still the master had not returned.

The servant thought: "Why should I wait for him longer? I shall eat the heart of the lamb and this he will even not notice."

At his return the wonder-doctor knew well that his servant had disobeyed him.

"Where is the lamb's heart?"

"A lamb has no heart."

"You ate it?"

"No! No! How could I eat a thing that does not exist!"

And thus for a long time they argued—the one insisting that the lamb had a heart, the other—that it had none. At last the wonder-doctor said:

"There is no use in arguing with you; he who is wiser—yields."

Proceeding upon their way, the wonder-doctor healed many sick people just as he had healed the son of the rich merchant.

On their wanderings they arrived at the capital



of a famous King. But all the people looked sad and a gloom hung over the city.

"Our King's daughter is very ill! There is no doctor who can heal her. The King has promised to give away half of his kingdom and his daughter in marriage to the healer, but as yet no one has succeeded."

Before going to bed that evening the wonder-doctor reminded his servant that on the morrow they would go to the palace to cure the Princess.

But the servant could not rest. He was sure he had seen enough of the healing to know how it was done and he wished to do it himself. When his master was fast asleep, he stole out of the room, took the medicine bag and hurried to the palace.

He awakened the King and said: "I am a famous doctor. I have heard about the illness of your daughter and I am here to help her. Tomorrow it might be already too late!"

The King examined him from head to heel and remarked with contempt:

"You a doctor! A swine doctor you may be, that is all!"

"In three hours' time your daughter will be well as ever or you may hang me," declared the fake-doctor, so sure was he that he could manage it.

At length the King yielded and the servant started immediately with his work. He was led



into the room of the Princess; the door was locked so that he could not escape in case of mishap.

He did everything his master used to do on similar occasions. In the end he also dropped some medicine into the princess' mouth. One, two, three . . . ten drops, but the princess neither moved nor did her cheeks get any color. In his terror he poured the whole bottle into her mouth, but in vain, for that which is dead, is dead.

And oh! How frightened he now was! Many and many times he sighed: "Oh, the unlucky wretch that I am! If only my master were here!" He tried to escape but the room was locked and he could not. He knew well they would hang him, for he himself had proposed this.

In his despair, he crept into the stove and closed the door.

Three hours later the King entered the chamber. At the sight of his dead daughter his grief became boundless. He ordered the arrest of the fake-doctor. The guards prepared to seize him but the man had vanished.

The stove in which the servant was hidden chanced to be too short, so that his legs were close against the door. The trembling of that poor frightened man made the stove-door rattle: prr, prrr, prrrr. The guards noticed this noise, looked into the stove and dragged out the offender.



The now enraged King shouted:

"To the gallows you wished to go if you failed, and now go! As the work, so the reward!"

The fake-doctor was led out to be executed.

In the morning, when the master awoke he missed both his servant and his medicine bag. As they had talked about the ailing Princess the night before he concluded that his servant must have gone to heal her. Straightway to the palace he also went. There he learned what had taken place during the night.

Upon his request he was led to the body of his dead servant; he gave him a few drops of his wonderful medicine. Instantly the servant was on his feet again and as brisk as before.

Awe-stricken, all those who witnessed the miracle pleaded:

"You are a wondrous, great healer! None but you can heal our Princess. Have pity on us! Help her and our King!"

They led him to the King's palace where the King himself joined with them in their pleas.

Three drops of the wonderful medicine sufficed. The Princess jumped out of her bed merrily laughing and in her usual frolicsome mood.

The King, overcome with joy, was willing to reward the healer with a half of his kingdom and his daughter in marriage.



But the wonder-doctor refused both, saying:

"We are not in need of anything! Cherish your daughter and rule over your kingdom for many years to come."

"No, no! The King's daughter belongs to me!" cried the servant.

An angry look from his master's eye, however, silenced him and he only muttered to himself: "What a fool! He takes nothing himself, neither does he allow me to take anything. What a pity! What a shame!"

Again the wonder-doctor strode on, while his servant, carrying the bag, kept pace with him.

"Why did you steal my bag?" questioned the master.

"I did not steal it."

"How did my bag come to the palace?"

"It went by itself."

"A bag never does go by itself."

"But your bag went. I only went after it and by chance began the healing."

The servant pondered and pondered but he could not understand why he had failed to heal the Princess. He concluded that by mistake he must have taken the wrong bottle and thus spoiled everything. In the future he would have to be more careful. Soon afterwards he decided to leave his master and to become a doctor on his own.



One night when his master had fallen asleep he again took the medicine bag and hastened away. He ran and ran. After a while he believed himself to be safe from every possible pursuit. Soon a river stopped his further progress. How to cross it? Fortunately the river did not seem deep. He sprang into it, but the bottom was soft and muddy. Deeper and deeper he sank through the dark water. Soon the water was up to his mouth.

The poor man screamed with all his might: "Help! Help! Everybody who hears and sees me, help!"

Unexpectedly his master appeared on the shore. He held out a long pole and helped him out.

"Why did you again want to steal my bag?"

"My dear master, I did not steal it. I just went for a little walk and fell into the water."

"Find those who would believe this tale! I do not! Give me my bag, I shall carry it myself, so that you will never again feel tempted to steal it."

And on they went again. Suddenly the master stopped, took a shovel out of his bag, gave it to the servant, saying: "Dig here, under this bush, and you will find something." The master himself put his bag under his head and went to sleep. The servant dug and dug. And true enough! Soon he beheld a big iron chest brimful with golden coins.



"All this is mine, for all my troubles!" gloated the servant. "Why should I share with my master? I shall deny I have found the chest," and hurriedly he covered the chest with soil.

After a while his master opened his eyes, looked around and asked: "Did you find anything?"

"Nothing at all! I dug and toiled very hard, but all I saw was sand and earth."

"No? You did not find anything? Then I myself must dig."

Hardly had he taken the shovel in his hands when the treasure-chest came to sight. Together they dragged it out. Now the master bade his servant to divide the money and the latter began to separate it into two piles.

"Stop! Stop!" interrupted the master, "divide the money not in two, but into eight heaps."

"Why? There are not eight of us!"

"Of course not! But we must share with some others. Do as I bid!"

When the money was divided, the servant took one part and asked slyly: "Who will get the six heaps?"

"The church will get one part; the poor, the second; the eater of the lamb's heart, the third; he who wanted to steal my things, gets the fourth; to the thief of my bag, the fifth and to him who found the treasure chest, the sixth."



Thereupon the servant exclaimed gaily: "All this belongs to me! I ate the lamb's heart! I wanted to steal your things! I stole your bag! I found the treasure chest!"

In reply his master shook his head gravely, saying:

"How can I believe you, brother? Hundreds of times you have assured me of the opposite. In the hope of getting the money you purposely declare yourself guilty of crimes you have never committed."

"But I have done all this!" repeated the servant again and again.

"If that is so, then we cannot stay in partnership any longer. Take your share and go! With liars and cheaters I do not work," said the master sadly and vanished with all the gold. For his servant he had left behind exactly as much money as he had given away to the poor.

All over the country the servant sought his master and inquired whither he had gone. He was told that his master had gone to Heaven. To Heaven, then, the servant went in search of his master. When he arrived the gate was closed. He knocked shyly. At the gate who should appear but his own master, who happened to be St. Peter himself.

"Let me in! Let me in!" begged the servant.



"No! No! Liars and cheaters are not admitted! I gave you the wonder-sack, what else do you need?"

The servant took off his sack from his neck and hung it on a peg just by Heaven's gate. Again he pleaded to be let in.

"You have everything in your sack; why do you wish to come to Heaven?"

Lately the sack had not fulfilled his wishes. Now he was led to believe that St. Peter had sent all sorts of good things into it and he thought: "If only I were in the sack to see what treasures it contains!"

Hardly had he finished his thought when—plop! into the sack he went; in it he found nothing at all. Through the half-open gate his eyes beheld the wonderful sights of life in Heaven. He struggled frantically to get out of the sack, but he could not. In the sack he was and there he was to remain to watch the happiness of life in Heaven from afar.

If St. Peter has not taken the sack from the hanger, the greedy peasant still hangs there.



**THE DAWN AND THE
SUNSET-GLOW**

THE DAY AND THE
SUNSET-GLOW



THE DAWN AND THE SUNSET-GLOW (KOIT JA HÄMARIK)

DO you know the Light-Giver in the Vanaisa's hall? See! it is setting, as is shown by the shining stripes on the horizon in the West, and you will see the morning glow appear in the East, from where, without delay, it will greet nature in its full beauty. Do you know who receives the sun and sends it to rest, when its day is done? Do you know who lights it again and puts it anew each morning in the heavens?

Vanaisa had two faithful slaves, to whom eternal youth was given. When the Light-Giver had ended his daily route on the first day, Vanaisa said to Hämarik—the Sunset-Glow: “In your care, my daughter, I give the setting sun. Put it out and keep it carefully, that it may not come to any harm.”



On the next morning when it was time for the sun to start upon its journey again, Vanaisa said to Koit—the Dawn: “Your duty, my son, will be to light the Light-Giver and make him ready for his journey.”

Faithfully they both performed their tasks. The Light-Giver never failed to appear on the eastern horizon.—In the winter time it moves nearer to the edge of the world, sets earlier and starts its work later in the morning; but in the springtime, when it awakens the flowers and the singing birds and when in summer it ripens the crops with its glowing rays, it is allowed only a short resting time. Hämarik passes the setting sun into the hands of the Dawn, who in his turn lights it at once to start another day.

The prettiest time of the year has arrived, when the flowers bloom and perfume the air. Birds and men fill the earth with songs under the Ilmarine’s firmament. Vanaisa’s faithful slaves once looked too deeply into each other’s eyes. Hämarik passed the dimmed sun to the hands of Koit; they mutually pressed their hands and their lips met.

Only one eye, who never sleeps, had seen what happened secretly in the quietness of midnight. On the next day Vanaisa called them both and said to them: “I am satisfied with the work of you both and I want you to become perfectly happy. Be-





THE LIGHT-GIVER NEVER FAILED TO APPEAR

long to each other and fulfill your duty in the future as man and wife."

At once they both exclaimed: "Vanaisa, do not spoil our joy. Allow us to stay for ever as betrothed bride and bridegroom in which state we have found our happiness and in which the love stays always young and new."

Vanaisa granted their request and blessed their undertaking. The lovers meet at midnight only once a year for four weeks. When Hämarik passes the extinguished sun to Koit, the lovers



shake hands and kiss each other. The redness of Hämarik's blushing cheeks is reflected in the pink evening sky, while the yellow shine on the edge of the sky is the foreboding of the rising sun, whom Koit has just lighted anew.

And still Vanaisa decorates, at their meeting time, the meadows with the prettiest flowers and the nightingales call mockingly to Hämarik: "You lazy girl, lazy girl, the night is long, bring whip, bring whip, whip, whip, whip!"



**THE BIRTH OF THE "MOTHER
RIVER"**



THE BIRTH OF THE "MOTHER RIVER" (EMAJŌGI)

VANAISA' had created the world and had spread over it the blue firmament with its shining sun and moon and twinkling stars. Animals roamed the hills and plants grew and blossomed everywhere. The animals, however, did not obey the orders of Vanaisa; hatred arose among them and they pursued each other. Then Vanaisa gathered them all together and said to them:

"I created you all, that you might feel the joys of life but you hate and are trying to kill each other. I see it is necessary to give you a King to tame you and to rule over you. To prepare for his coming you must dig a river, on the shores of which he can abide in peace. Dig the river wide and deep, so that small creatures may live in it.





EVEN THE SWALLOW AND ALL THE BIRDS WERE BUSY

Mother River will be the river's name. Do not throw away the soil you dig out, but pile it up, so that pretty forests can grow and thrive, and there your King shall live. I see many of you gathered here. Each one knows what he can do. Quick, to work!" And Vanaisa left them alone.

At once they started to work. The hare led; the



fox followed, and his tail as it brushed along over the ground left a mark, showing where the river should run; the mole ploughed the first furrow; the wolf dug; the bear carried the dirt away; even the swallow and all the birds were busy.

When the river was finished Vanaisa came to see what had been done. He was satisfied with their work and praised each worker:

"Mole and bear, you have worked most diligently as you are covered with mud all over. Let those dirty clothes remain as a token and become your clothes of honor. Wolf, you have worked well with snout and feet; in remembrance of that you shall always keep a black snout and black feet. But where is the crab? He is always such an alert fellow and has many hands; has he now slept?"

The crab had just crept out of the mud where he had been digging. He became angry because Vanaisa had not noticed him at his work and he exclaimed wrathfully:

"Old Man, where are your eyes, that you cannot see me? I suppose they are in the back of your head!"

"You silly meddler," answered Vanaisa, "your own eyes shall, from this time on, be on your back!" And so they are to this day!

When the river channel was finished, Vanaisa



poured water into it from a golden bowl, blew upon the water with his breath to make it alive and showed the direction in which it should flow. All the animals rejoiced and were glad.

This was the birth of the Mother River and this is the story of its digging.



THE WOOD OF TONTLA

THE BOOK OF JONATHAN



THE WOOD OF TONTLA

IN olden days there was in Alutaga a pretty wood, called the Wood of Tontla. No human being dared to enter it. It was said that people who had chanced to come to the borders of the wood, had seen a tumble-down house under the thick trees and a host of ragged, sooty human-like beings swarming around it, like ants in an ant-hill.

Once it happened that a peasant on his way home from a feast, one dark night lost his way and wandered into the Wood of Tontla. There he beheld a marvelous thing indeed! Around a bright bonfire was gathered a crowd of women and children; some sat on the ground, while the others danced about. An old woman, with an iron ladle in her hand, scattered, from time to time, hot



ashes over the grass; then the children would rise high up into the air, fluttering around, like owls, and then they came down again.

Out of the wood came a Little Old Man, with a long gray beard and with a big sack on his back and the sack was bigger than the man. The women and children ran to meet him with loud shouts. They whirled around him and tried to pull down his sack, but somehow he managed to get rid of them. Then a big black cat, as large as a foal, sprang from the threshold upon the Old Man's sack, and they disappeared inside the house.

But the peasant's head was dull from the excessive feasting, and everything appeared double to his eyes, so no one could be sure what part of his story was true and what not. From generation to generation however, similar stories circulated about the Wood of Tontla, but nothing definite could be learned.

The King of Sweden * had given orders several times to destroy the mysterious wood but the people dreaded to fulfill the command, for it was said that once a bold man had struck one of the trees with his axe, whereupon blood began to ooze from the tree and a cry was heard, as of a person in great pain. The man fled terrified and trembling all over; and after that nothing could again induce a

* Refers to the time when Estonia was under Swedish rule.



wood-cutter to enter, or to touch a tree in the Wood of Tontla!

Not far from the Wood lay a big village. Here a peasant widower had recently married again, and as often happens, he brought into the house an ill-tempered, quarrelsome woman. By his first marriage he had a little daughter seven years old, whose name was Els; she was a bright child and had a lively imagination. The cruel stepmother made her life unbearable, scolding and beating her daily, from morning to night; and the food she gave to the child was worse than that she fed to her dogs. The father was a weakling and could not defend his child but he himself danced to the piping of his wife. For over two years Els had suffered misery and want and in her trouble she had secretly shed bitter tears. It came to pass that one Sunday she went picking berries with the other village children and as they roamed around, the children came to the borders of the Wood of Tontla without knowing where they were. The strawberries they saw growing there were the finest they had ever seen! The grass was red with them! The children ate the delicious berries and filled their baskets, made of bark, with all the strawberries they would hold.

Suddenly the eldest of the children, a boy, recognized the dreaded place and shouted:



"Run! Run! We are in the Wood of Tontla!"

At these words, more powerful than fire or thunder, the children ran, as if all the ghosts of Tontla were after them.

But Els had gone deeper into the wood than the others and had just found the sweetest berries there under the bushes; she heard the warning of the boy, but she did not wish to leave the berries, and she thought:

"The people of Tontla can be no worse than my stepmother!" A little black dog with a silver bell around its neck, came running up to her, barking loudly. After the dog there appeared a little girl, dressed in silk, who bade the dog to be quiet and said to Els:

"I am glad you did not run away with the other children. Stay here and keep me company! We can play nicely together and gather berries every day. I hope my mother will not object, when I ask her permission. Come, let us go at once to my mother."

Then the strange child took Els by her hand and led her deeper into the wood. The little black dog barked now for joy and jumped at Els and licked her hands, as if they were old friends.

And now! What wonders and splendor greeted the eyes of little Els! She was certain she was in heaven! A beautiful garden, with fruit-trees and



bushes lay before her; on the branches of the trees sat wonderful birds, richer in color than the brightest of butterflies; some of them were covered with gold and silver feathers; the birds were so tame, that the children could take them in their hands, if they wished. In the middle of the garden stood the Manor-House, made of crystal and precious stones, and it glittered like the sun. A lady in fine garments sat on a bench at the entrance; she asked her little daughter:

“Who is the child you are bringing home with you?”

“I found her alone in the woods, and I brought her home to keep me company. May she stay with us?”

The mother smiled but said not a word; she only examined Els from head to foot. Then she invited Els to come nearer, stroked her cheeks and asked her about her home; were her parents alive, and would she like to stay here.

Els kissed the Lady's hand, fell on her knees and said, bursting into tears:

“For a long time my mother has rested under the sward.

“Mother was carried away on the road-way,
Caresses departed by the by-way.

“My father still lives, but what good does it do



when my stepmother hates me? Nothing I do pleases her. Dear, gracious Lady, let me stay with you! Let me tend your cattle or give me some other work; gladly shall I do everything and obey you always, only do not send me back to my stepmother! She would beat me to death because I stayed away longer than the other children."

The Lady smiled and said:

"We shall see what I can do for you."

Then she rose and entered the house.

"Have no fear, my mother is kind! I saw by her looks that she will grant our wish, when she thinks it over," said the little girl. She bade Els to wait, and following her mother, disappeared inside the house. Els trembled with hope and fear; the minutes of waiting seemed endless in her anxiety to learn what the Lady would decide.

After a while the little girl returned with a small box in her hand:

"My mother said we should go and play to-day, until she makes up her mind about you. I hope you will stay with us, for I should be very sorry to let you go. Have you ever been on the sea?"

Els' mouth and eyes opened wide with surprise and she asked:

"On the sea? What is that? I have never heard of such a thing."

"Soon you will see it," replied the girl and she



opened the small box, which contained a leaf, a shell and two fish-bones. A few dew-drops were glittering on the leaf and the little girl spilled them upon the ground. Instantly the garden, the pretty lawn and everything around them vanished, and as far as eyes could see, nothing but sky and water could be seen. Only under the children's feet a patch of firm land remained.

The little girl set the shell on the water and took the fish-bones in her hands. The shell swelled and grew into a fine big boat, which easily could hold a dozen children. The two girls stepped into the boat, Els timidly, but the other girl in a rollicking, happy-go-lucky mood. The fish-bones in her hands changed into oars; the waves tossed them along as in a cradle and carried them on and on; little by little other boats came sailing up filled with people who laughed and sang merrily.

"We must sing to them in turn," said the little girl. Els did not know how to sing, but the other child sang beautifully. Els could not understand what they were singing but she noticed that they often repeated the word: "Kiisike!" She asked her companion what it meant and received this answer:

"That is my name."

They did not know how long their pleasure-ride had lasted, when they heard a voice calling:



“Children, come home! It will soon be dark!”

Kiisike took the box from her pocket, dipped the leaf into the water, so that a few drops of water remained on it. Instantly they were back in the beautiful garden, near the Manor-House and no traces of water were to be seen. Kiisike put the leaf, the shell and the fish-bones back into the box, and the two girls went home.

In a spacious room, around the meal-table, were twenty-four Ladies, all dressed in gorgeous robes, as if they were at a wedding feast. At the head of the table sat Kiisike's mother on a golden chair. Els wished she had more eyes to admire all this beauty! The table was set with thirteen gold and silver dishes but one of the dishes was left untouched and not even its cover was lifted during the meal.

Els enjoyed the dainty food, which tasted better to her than the sweetest cakes.

At the table conversation was carried on in a low voice and in a strange tongue, of which Els did not understand a word. At length the Lady said something to the maid who was standing behind her chair; the maid hurried out and shortly she returned, accompanied by a Little Old Man, whose beard was longer than himself. The Little Old Man bowed low and waited at the door. The Lady pointed to Els and said:



"See this village child, whom I intend to adopt. Make me an image of her, to send to the village in her place."

The Little Old Man looked at Els with an expert eye, as if taking her measure, bowed again and left. When the meal was over, the Lady said to Els:

"Kiisike begged me to let you stay here to be her playmate; you yourself also said that you would like to stay with us. Is that not so?"

In her gratitude Els fell to her knees and kissed the Lady's hands and thanked her with all her heart. The Lady lifted her up, stroked her hair and patted her cheeks and said:

"If you will always be a good and obedient child, you will be happy and the best care will be given you here, till you grow up and can shift for yourself. My young Ladies, who teach Kiisike, will instruct you also, and will teach you all manner of fine handiwork and other useful things."

The Little Old Man returned, and carried on his shoulder a trough filled with clay; in his left hand he held a little basket, covered with a lid. He set them on the floor, took a piece of clay into his hands and began to model a doll, which soon took the shape of a real child.

The body of the doll was left hollow, and he put into it three small fishes and a piece of bread. In its breast the Little Old Man made a hole, took



from his basket a long, black snake and let it wriggle through the hole inside the breast of the doll. Then the Lady examined the doll from all sides and the Little Old Man said:

"Now we do not need anything else, except one drop of the village child's blood."

Els grew pale, as she listened to this, for she thought that if she gave a drop of her blood, she would sell her soul to the Evil Spirit. But the Lady comforted her, saying:

"Have no fear! We do not want your blood for evil, but only for your own good and for your own future happiness."

She took a fine gold needle, pricked Els' arm and gave the needle to the Little Old Man, who stuck it where the doll's heart should be. Then he placed the doll in the basket and promised to come next morning and to show the results of his work.

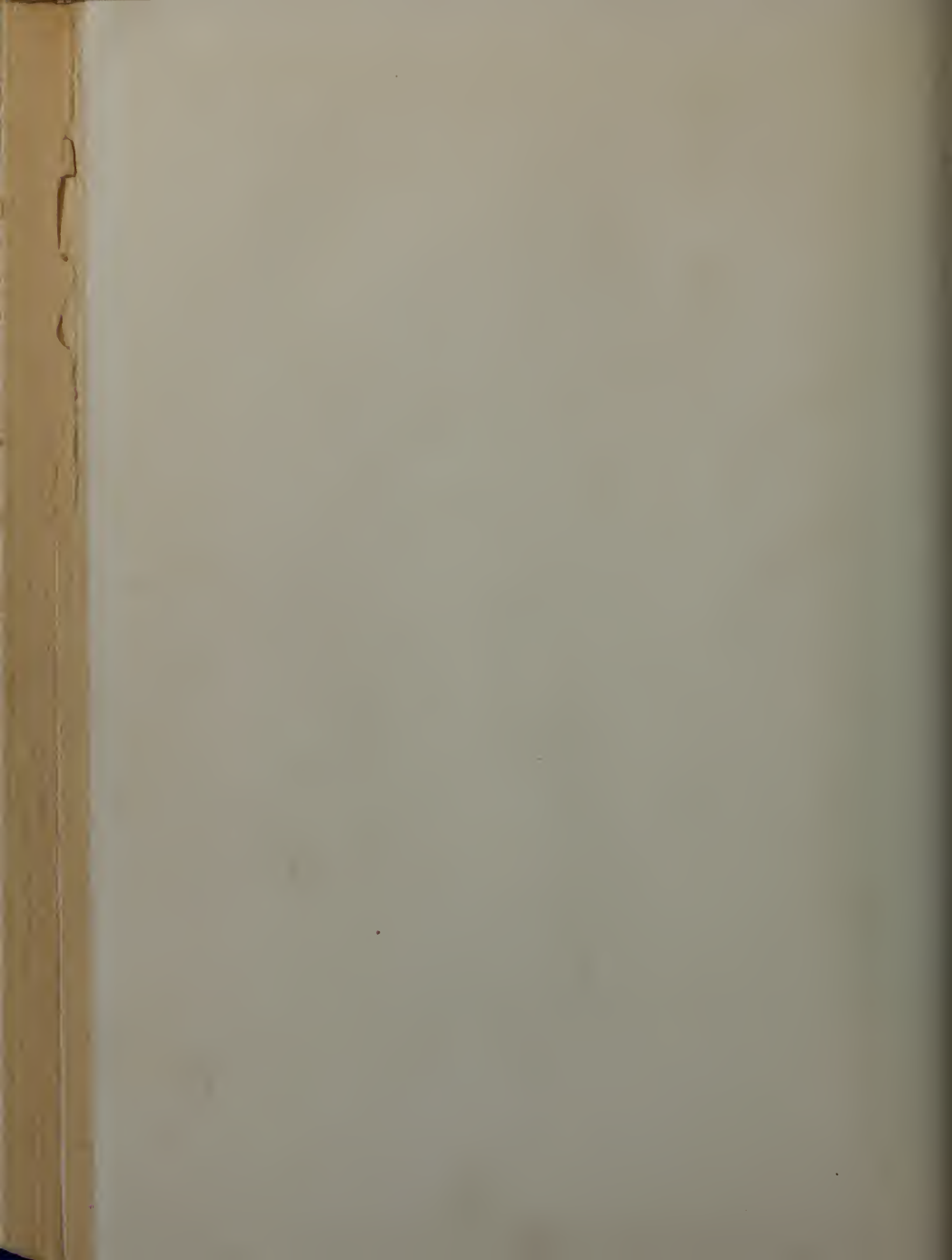
After that they all went to sleep. 'A' chambermaid took Els to her bedroom, where a soft bed, with silken covers and downy pillows, was made up for her.

On the following morning, when Els awoke, she found herself wearing a gown, as fine as air, and the loveliest clothes lay on a chair beside her bed. A maid came and told Els to wash her face and to comb her hair; soon Els was clad from head to





"RUN! RUN! WE ARE IN THE WOOD OF TONTLA!"



foot in beautiful clothes as if she were a child of noble birth. Nothing pleased Els more than the shoes! For until now she had gone barefooted most of the time. She was certain that not even the King's daughters could have nicer shoes than she!

Her old clothes had been taken away—and Els soon learned why. They were put on the figure of clay, which was to take her place in the village.

During the night in a secret chamber the doll had grown and in the morning it looked just like Els; it even could run about like any other child. Els was very much frightened to see this perfect copy of herself, but the Lady reassured her and said:

“Be not afraid! Clay cannot harm you. We shall send this image to your stepmother for her to beat instead of you! She may beat it to her heart's content, for the image of clay will feel no pain. But if the wicked woman does not change for the better, then, some day, your image will punish her, as she deserves.”

From that time on Els lived a happy life, as if she were the petted child of noble parents and had been rocked in a golden cradle. Trouble, toil and sorrow became a thing of the past; even her studies grew easier day by day and her former misery seemed only a bad dream to her now.

The more Els lived in her new surroundings,



the queerer, everything appeared to her; all the strange things that she saw here could not come to pass naturally, but she was sure that a Magic Power must be ruling over life here.

A big granite stone stood about twenty paces from the entrance of the Manor-House. Before every meal, the Little Old Man went to the stone, took a silver rod from his bosom and tapped the stone with it three times until it rang in response. Instantly a Golden Cock sprang out from under and seated himself on the top. Every time the Cock crowed or flapped his wings, something appeared from under the stone. First came a large table, provided with just so many covers as there were people; the table moved into the house by itself, as if carried on the wings of the wind. At the Cock's second crowing, out came chairs and followed the table into the house; then one after another dishes filled with food leaped out and settled on the table. Then came bottles of mead and apples and berries. Everything seemed alive, and no servants were necessary to carry the food and to wait at table.

When the meal was over the Little Old Man tapped the stone again with his silver rod, and then the Golden Cock crowed for all the bottles, dishes, plates, chairs and the table to return under the stone. But when the thirteenth dish came, the one



that was never touched, a big black cat followed it, sat beside it on the stone, next to the Cock, and stayed there until the Little Old Man came to carry them all away. He took the dish in his hand, the cat under his arm, the Cock on his shoulder and vanished with them under the stone.

Not only food and drink, but also clothes and all kinds of household goods leaped out from under the stone when the Golden Cock crowed.

One day Els asked Kiisike, why the thirteenth dish appeared on the table every day since no one ate from it. Kiisike could not tell her, but she asked her mother about it and in a few days the Lady sent for Els and said to her very earnestly:

“Do not trouble your heart with vain thoughts, which will bring you no good. You want to know why we never eat from the thirteenth dish? I can only tell you that we dare not touch it, or our happiness would come to an end.”

The years passed by with the speed of the wind. Els grew up to be a lovely maiden. Kiisike, on the contrary, was the same little child she was, when they first met in the wood. The young Ladies, the companions of Kiisike's mother, daily instructed Kiisike and Els in reading and writing and in all kinds of handiwork. Els' progress was good but Kiisike often preferred childish play to useful work. When a frolicsome mood took hold of her,





" I KNEW THAT I WOULD FIND YOU HERE "

Kiisike would throw aside her work, seize her little box and run out to play "sea," and no one would mind. Sometimes she said to Els:

"What a pity that you have grown so big, and can play with me no longer." Thus nine years had passed, when one evening the Lady sent for Els to come to her bedroom. Els was much surprised, because the Lady had never called her before at



such a late hour. Her heart beat like a captured bird in her bosom, and seemed ready to burst. When she entered the room Els noticed that the Lady's cheeks were red and her eyes full of tears.

"Dear foster-child," began the Lady, "the time has come for us to part."

"Part?" cried Els, falling on her knees before the Lady. "No, no! Dear Lady, surely that is not possible, only death has the power to part us. I beseech you, have pity on me and do not drive me away; I want no other happiness than to live with you until I die."

"Say no more, dear child! My heart aches within me, but it is inevitable that everything must happen as I tell you. You are a mortal, and some day your life will come to an end, and therefore you cannot remain here any longer. Though I and all the others who are around me appear in human shape, we are not humans, but Higher Beings, whom people cannot know. In a country far away you will find a loving husband, who is waiting for you. It is not easy for me also to part with you, but it must be, and you must submit."

The Lady combed Els' hair with a golden comb and sent her to bed. But how could poor Els fall asleep this night? Life seemed to her desperately dark and hopeless.



In the meantime the Clay-Image had replaced Els in her father's house in the village. The image, which did not feel any pain, endured without a murmur all the cruelty of the wicked stepmother, who beat and abused her both day and night.

But one day it happened that the stepmother again abused the Clay-Image, and in her rage she seized the image by the throat with both her hands to choke her, when behold! A black snake darted out hissing and stung the stepmother in her tongue, and she instantly fell dead to the ground.

When the husband came home in the evening he found his wife lying dead on the floor; she was swollen like the stump of a tree, but the daughter was nowhere to be seen. The man called and shouted until the neighbors came. They had heard screams coming from the house at noon-time, but as such things were of daily occurrence there no one paid any more attention than usual. In the afternoon all had become quiet again but no one had seen the child. Tired from his day's work, the husband retired to his chamber, and must have thanked his fortune that at last he was rid of the woman. On the table he found three small fishes and a crust of bread, which he ate for his supper and went to bed. Next morning he too was found dead and his body was as swollen as that of his wife. A few days later, they were buried both



in the same grave, but now they could not quarrel any more. Their daughter had vanished completely and was never seen again.

Els had not closed her eyes the whole night and wept bitterly over the coming parting. In the morning the Lady gave her a seal-ring; hung a gold locket around her neck from a silken ribbon and then she called the Little Old Man and sadly took leave of her. Before Els had time to thank the Lady, the Little Old Man gently tapped her head with his little silver rod three times. Thereupon Els felt herself changing into a bird; her arms turned into wings, her legs into eagle's legs, with long, strong claws; her nose became a hooked beak and feathers covered all of her body. Suddenly she rose and soared through the air below the clouds, just like a real eagle.

For many days she flew towards the South, resting her tired wings now and then but she felt no hunger.

Then one day, as she hovered low over a forest, where hounds were barking, a sharp arrow suddenly pierced her wing. In fear and pain she dropped down in a swoon.

When she recovered her senses and opened her eyes again, she found herself lying under a bush in her human form. How had she come here? All the other strange things, which had happened to



her, seemed but an obscure dream. Then she beheld a handsome young Prince, riding towards her. He sprang from his horse, gave her his hand in greeting and said:

“At a lucky hour did I set out from home this morning! Of you, Beloved Maiden, I have dreamed every night for half a year, and I knew that I would find you here in the forest. Hundreds of times have I tramped this road in vain, yet did I not lose hope. To-day I shot an eagle, who must have fallen near by and searching for the bird I found—you!”

He lifted her up into his saddle and together they rode to the city, where the Old King welcomed them. A few days later their wedding was celebrated. On the morning of the wedding-day, fifty cart-loads of costly things arrived for Els from her kind foster-mother. After the death of the Old King, Els became Queen. In her old days she liked to relate the story of the adventures of her childhood and her youth.

But no one has ever since seen or heard of the Wood of Tontla.



**THE TENDER-HEARTED
WOOD-CUTTER**

THE FRODO BAGGINS
JOURNALS



THE TENDER-HEARTED WOOD-CUTTER

IN olden days a man went into the forest to cut some fire-wood. He came to a birch and intended to fell it, but the birch begged plaintively: "Allow me to live! I am yet young and have many children, who would mourn my death." The Wood-cutter pitied the birch and went on to the oak-tree. The oak, seeing the axe exclaimed mournfully: "Let me live! I am still strong and robust; the acorns on me are unripe and unfit for planting. Where will the coming generations get oak-wood, if my acorns are to be destroyed?" The man listened to this argument and went on to the ash-tree: "Let me live! I am young and got mar-



ried only yesterday. What will become of my wife, poor thing, if I should be killed?" wailed the ash.

Then the Wood-cutter went to the maple-tree: "Let me live! My children are all very young and what will become of them, when I am gone?" begged the maple.

Then the man went to the alder-tree: "Let me live! My sap is now flowing and I have to feed many small creatures with it. What will become of them if I should be cut down?"

Thus it went on: every tree begged for mercy in a human voice, and the compassionate Wood-cutter always desisted. The aspen-tree asked for mercy because "the Creator had created it to rustle its leaves in the wind and to frighten the wrong-doers from their wicked ways."

The wild-cherry said "that it had to give shelter to the singing birds and the birds would leave the country, if it should be cut down, and people be deprived of the beautiful singing of the birds."

The mountain-ash remarked "that the clusters of its berries were still growing, in order to provide the birds with food during the fall and winter. What would become of them, poor things, if I were hacked down?"

Then the man decided to try to chop down the fir-trees; but spruce and the pine, to whom he went next also begged for mercy, saying: "We have to



stay green to adorn nature both in summer and in winter."

The juniper, said to be the real treasure of the woods and the bringer of happiness to all creatures, animals as well as men, begged hard to be spared, and said: "My juice cures ninety-nine diseases," so what could the poor man do, but pass the juniper by?

The Wood-cutter sat on a hillock in deep meditation. He did not know what to do, how did he dare to go home empty-handed, as his wife was waiting for the wood! As he sat in troubled thoughts there stepped out of the forest an old man with a long gray beard; he wore a shirt of birch bark and a coat of spruce bark. The newcomer came to the Wood-cutter and asked the reason for his distress. The Wood-cutter related his story and told how he had found the trees alive, with their own wishes and their own language; and how he had been unable to resist their pleas for mercy.

The stranger gave him a cheerful look and thanked the Wood-cutter for having spared his children and for listening to their requests. As a token of his gratitude he gave the Wood-cutter a rod of gold which would fulfill all his wishes in the future, but he also warned him to take care that the wishes never should be extravagant or im-



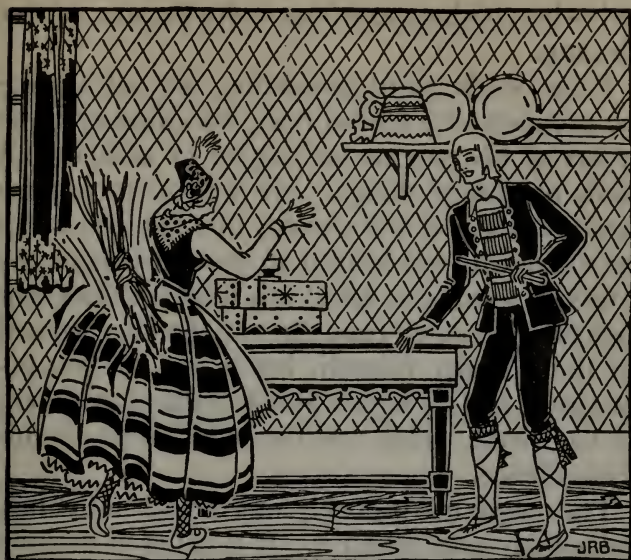
possible, or misfortune would happen instead of expected happiness.

If he wanted to erect a building he had only to go to an ant-hill, wave the rod three times over it, explain how the work was to be done and on the next morning the order would be executed. If he needed food he had only to tell the kettle what he wanted; if he wanted some sweets, he had to show the rod of gold to the bees and they would bring him more honeycomb than he and his family could use; the trees would give him sap, milk and healing juice. If he needed silk, linen or woollen fabrics, spiders would weave just as he desired them. Then the stranger said he was the Wood-Spirit, whom Vanaisa had assigned to rule over the trees. Saying that the old man disappeared.

The Wood-cutter had a wicked wife, who met him angrily and rebuked him when she saw him returning without the wood and wished that all the birch twigs would gather into bunches of rods and "tan" all idlers' skin. "Let it happen as you wish," said the man waving the rod and the quarrelsome wife got a good spanking! The Wood-cutter rejoiced greatly when he saw that his luck-rod became a corrector of his bad-tempered wife.

Then he wanted to try out the building ability of the ants and ordered to build him a new grain storehouse in the back-yard; and next morning it





"LET IT HAPPEN AS YOU WISH," SAID THE MAN

was finished! Who was now happier than the Wood-cutter? The kettle cooked and served his food; the spiders weaved his textures, the moles ploughed his fields and the ants sowed in the spring and gathered the crops in the fall,—the help of a human hand was needed nowhere!

The owner of the magic rod lived happily to the end of his life, as he had always remembered the warning of the Wood-Spirit and never wished for impossible things. At his death he left the magic



rod to his children, to whom it also became a great blessing.

Later, in the third generation, the rod became the property of a foolish man, who disobeyed the orders of his parents and began to wish for all kinds of absurd things. He wanted to test the power of the rod and one day ordered it to bring the sun down from heaven, to warm his back. As it was impossible to fulfill this wish, Vanaisa sent such hot rays down from the sun, that they burned up the offender himself, his house, all his belongings; and no trace was left of the place where he had lived. This was the punishment for his disobedience.

The magic rod probably was melted in the fire, for nobody ever found it. It is believed that the trees in the woods became so terrified by the fire, that they lost their power of speech forever, and nobody since that time has heard a word from them, but they do whisper and whisper among themselves.



WOLF'S FOOD

WOLFE



WOLF'S FOOD

IN the old, old days the wolf was by no means the wicked wild beast he is now. He was as tame as our dogs are.

Once, however, a farmer's wife threw to a wolf, instead of his usual food, a red-hot stone. The wolf ran away from men and from this day on became the malicious beast he is.

The hot stone burned the wolf's jaws. For some time he and all his comrades received their food from Heaven.

But it came to pass that one day at meal-time one wolf was overlooked and left without food. He complained bitterly of this injustice.

"Eat him whom you meet first!" was the response to the wolf's complaint.



The hungry wolf tripped away in search of his food. Soon he met a ragged, skinny beggar.

"I received orders from Heaven to eat you!" barked the wolf.

"Dear wolf," prayed the beggar, "a poor morsel I would make for you. Just a heap of worthless, old bones. Better wait for a younger and tastier mouthful!"

"Quite right!" thought the wolf to himself. "An old creature like this is worth nothing! I shall rather look for a real tid-bit."

So graciously, he said to the beggar: "I grant your wish! Go!"

On and on ran the wolf. This time he met a woman.

"I shall devour you!" barked the wolf.

The woman shrieked and wailed: "Oh, good dear wolf, spare my life! I have little children at home. Who is to care for them if you kill me?"

"Now what am I to do?" thought the wolf. His stomach was more than empty and noisily demanded food. But he was moved to the depths of his heart by the pleas of the woman.

"Go back and live in peace with your children!" he said at last.

Onward and onward trotted the hungry wolf in his search.

Soon he encountered a sturdy young man.



The wolf halted before the young man and said:

"I have orders from Heaven to devour you. Be prepared! I shall begin at once."

"If so it is ordered from Heaven, I must obey. Eat me if you must! But before you start, let me measure if there is enough room for me in your stomach."

"But how will you do the measuring?"

"With the measure-stick, of course!"

The young man went and cut a good-sized cudgel from a bush by the roadside. After this he took off his belt.

"What are you going to do with this?" questioned the puzzled wolf.

"I am taking it off because it might prevent me from lying comfortably in your stomach. Here, take it! I present it to you!"

Here the young man tied one end of his belt to the wolf's leg, the other end to the trunk of a big tree.

"Now the measuring begins," he exclaimed. And immediately heavy blows began to fall, as fast as hail, upon the wolf's back.

The poor beast tried to free himself and flee, but could not.

"Dear friend, do not beat me any longer! I shall never eat you! I never for an instant meant it in earnest!" begged the wolf.





HE TIED ONE END OF HIS BELT TO THE WOLF'S LEG

“Whether you eat me or not, a good tanning you must get just the same!”

And the young man measured and measured the wolf's sides until all the fur came off. The wolf jerked and jumped about, howling with rage and pain. At last the belt broke and the wolf was lucky enough to escape.

When he returned to the woods he complained of his ill-luck to his comrades, and a whole pack of wolves decided to go to punish the insolent young man.



And they went.

When the young man noticed the approach of the wolves he knew he was in great danger. Quick as a flash he rushed up a big tree.

The angry wolves assembled under the tree and snarled at the young man fiercely. But they were unable to reach him. Then they held a council of war.

The wolf, who had been beaten, proposed: "Let us all lie down, one upon the other, so that the pile made by our bodies would be high enough for our topmost brother to reach the offender."

The whole pack was pleased with this plan.

The beaten wolf laid himself down first. The rest climbed one upon another's back and the heap grew higher and higher until it was high enough to reach their victim.

Suddenly the young man shouted in defiance: "Just you wait, Beaten-Sides! I tanned your hide once but you will get some more tanning now!"

At these words, the beaten wolf sprang up in terror and fled! The whole pile of wolves tumbled down, some breaking their necks, others their legs or ribs. They all ran for their lives and vanished into the woods, following the example set by Beaten-Sides.

The young man came down the tree and continued peacefully upon his way. And the wolves



abandoned forever thoughts of vengeance against him.

Ever since that day the wolf runs away when he meets a man, but the sight of sheep still makes him furious, as the belt with which Beaten-Sides was fastened to the tree-trunk was woven of sheep's wool.



THE BATHING NYMPHS

THE BAY STATE



THE BATHING NYMPHS

ONCE there lived a brave, restless Youth, who could find no peace, because he was much troubled with the strong desire to know all kinds of mysteries, unknown to men.

Eagerly he learned the language of the birds and in time he acquired other secret knowledge; then one day, by chance, he heard that at night queer things happened, things veiled and hidden from the eyes of mortals and he was seized with a great desire to see these mysteries for himself! For a time he visited one magician after another; he besought them to sharpen his eyes for this purpose but none knew how to help him.

At last he met the Sage of Finland, who was famous, far and near, for his skill in the art of Magic. The Great Sage tried to turn the bold Youth from his dangerous adventure and said:



"Dear son! Do not long for useless knowledge, which will bring you no happiness! Many things are purposely hidden from the eyes of man for his good, for the knowledge of them would destroy the peace of his heart. Those who have once had a glimpse of things hidden, can never be happy again in the daily round of everyday life. Before you decide, think it over and over carefully that you may not regret it later."

But the Youth would not listen and wilfully repeated his wish until at last the Great Sage said:

"If in spite of all my warnings you wish to bring misfortune upon yourself, I shall teach you what to do. But you must be bold! Or you can never learn what you are so anxious to know."

Thereupon the Old Sage of Finland told him the place and the time, when the King of the Serpents, once in every seven years, holds a great festival with his court. "Placed before the Serpent-King you will find a golden bowl filled with the milk of the Sky-Goat. If you can dip a piece of bread in the milk and put it into your mouth before you flee from your enemy, then all the hidden Secrets of the Night will be revealed to you! Luckily the great festival of the Serpents will be held this very year, else you would have had to wait for seven long years. Be brave, bold and quick, or you will never succeed."



The Youth determined to do as he was taught, even if it cost him his life.

At twilight on the appointed night he went to a vast marsh, where the great Festival was to be held. The moon was just rising and in its dim light he looked around with curious eyes expecting to see something strange, but nothing unusual drew his attention. All he could see was a number of hillocks.

He waited and watched. The time passed slowly and he was almost tired of waiting, when just as the hour of midnight struck, a bright, dazzling light flashed from the middle of the marsh. At once all the hillocks around him came to life and started to move; from out of each hillock crept hundreds of snakes, all crawling towards the light. What he thought were hillocks had really been heaps of live snakes, who had come here to await the arrival of their King. Soon all the snakes gathered around the light in one huge heap, which soon grew as large as a haystack, with the dazzling light still shining from its top.

The commotion in the huge snake-heap cannot be described.

At first the Youth stood motionless, struck dumb with terror. But little by little he recovered his courage and crept closer on tiptoe, very slowly,



step by step. But again the horrible sight terrified him for this is what he saw:

Thousands of snakes, both big and small and of all possible kinds and colors, hung in a cluster around a huge Serpent. On the head of the Serpent was a shining golden crown and it was this which gave out the light the Youth had seen from afar. Hundreds and thousands of snakes lifted their heads and hissed like angry geese, until the air was full of a deafening noise. The Youth could only stand still and stare and he doubted if he could ever carry out his plans.

As he stood there his look fell on the golden bowl standing before the Serpent-King and though his hair stood on end and his heart seemed to have stopped beating, without thinking he suddenly jumped over the hissing mass. Thousands of jaws flew open and the horrible creatures raised their heads to bite him, but they were tangled together and could not uncoil themselves quickly enough.

But oh! What dreadful hissing arose from the terrifying heap!

Quick as a flash of lightning, the Youth dipped a bit of bread into the golden bowl and put it in his mouth and rushed away, as if the ground under his feet were afire. He ran as fast as his legs could carry him and in his terror, he did not dare to look



back, though he heard the horrible hissing of thousands of snakes at his heels.

At last exhausted and out of breath, he fell senseless to the ground.

A restless sleep overcame him. He dreamed that the Serpent-King had caught him and was preparing to swallow him; with a cry of great fear he tried to escape. In his terror he sprang aside and—awoke. The sun was just rising and its first rays must have awakened him. He rubbed his eyes and looked around, but no trace remained of the horrid snakes and even the marsh, where they had gathered the night before was seven miles or more behind him.

How happy he was! All danger seemed over, and he had escaped safe and sound!

He slept through the afternoon and awoke recovered from the fatigue and horrors of the night. He decided to go into the woods this very night to learn what he had gained by tasting the milk of the Sky-Goat, and to see if all manner of hidden secrets would really be revealed to him.

And wonder of wonders! In the woods he saw things never before unveiled to the eyes of men! This is what he saw:

High up, in the tops of the trees hung golden bathing-benches, shining purple, like evening-glow. Silver whisks and silver water-basins lay





HE SAW BEINGS LOVELIER THAN HE COULD EVER IMAGINE

upon the benches! For whom was all this prepared? No living creature was anywhere. Who would come here to wash and whisk at this late hour?

A full moon was shining brightly and the Youth had spent some time in tense waiting when he heard a light noise, like rustling of leaves or the stirring of a breeze. From all directions he saw



approaching beings lovelier than he ever could have imagined. They were the fair and graceful daughters of the Wood-Spirit and Murueit, whose unearthly beauty no mortal eyes had ever seen.

High up on the golden benches, in the silvery moonlight, they began to bathe and to whisk themselves.

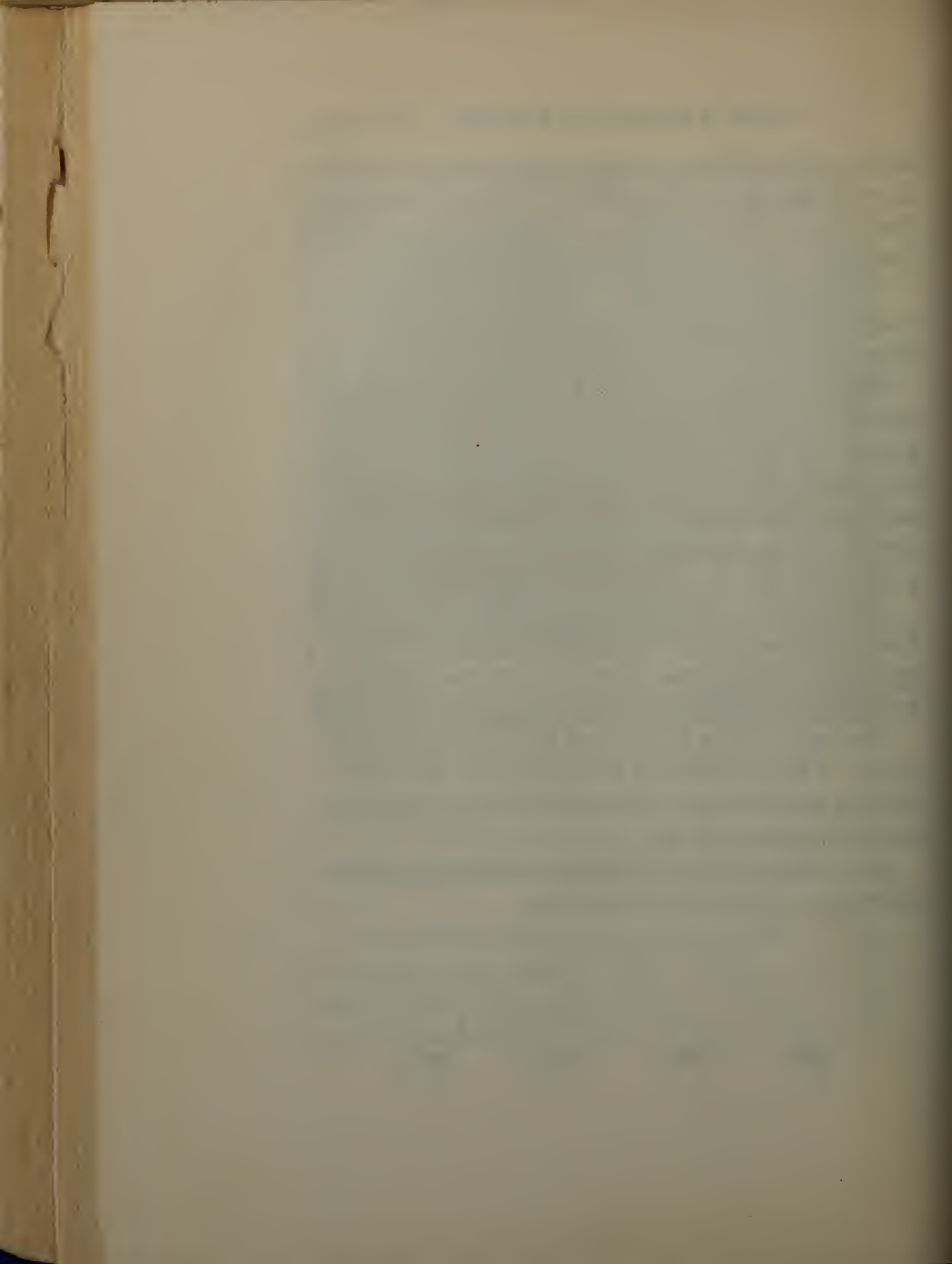
The Youth watched them from his hiding place behind a bush and marveled at their unearthly beauty. But as soon as the faint dawn of the new day appeared in the East, the whisks, the benches and the silver basins and the Wood-Nymphs too, vanished from sight, as if they had melted away in a cloud of fog.

Night after night the Youth returned to the familiar place in the wood, but all in vain! Never again did he see the Nymphs, or the bathing-benches with the silver basins and whisks.

The heart of the Youth was full of longing and grief. There seemed to be nothing in the world now he could enjoy, and he pined away and died with hopeless longing.

It is, indeed, a great blessing to man that all such mysteries are concealed from him.





**THE GODDAUGHTER OF
THE ROCK-FAIRIES**

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THE GODDAUGHTER OF THE ROCK-FAIRIES

ONCE a Young Woman went into the woods to pick berries. Her bark-basket was just filled and she was ready to go home, when accidentally she saw behind the trees something like a human body. She went nearer and found a young Girl with a pale face and a bleeding mouth, who had fainted under a bush. The Woman hastened to the near-by spring, poured the berries from her basket into her apron, filled the basket with cold water and ran with it and bathed the temples of the poor Girl, until she opened her eyes and looked around in astonishment.

Seeing the Young Woman at her side the Noble Lady (for such she was), after the first surprise was over, took her by the hand and said: "Your



kindness saved my life to-day. Who knows what would have become of me if you had not pitied me. The Old Wood-Spirit, the arch enemy of our race, encountered me to-day and beat me half dead, so that I fell unconscious to the ground. Without your help I would have to stay here! To-day I cannot give you a better reward than this ring, which I put on your finger. See, now we are bound forever! When a child will be born to you, then call me to stand sponsor for your child, and you have to receive me and my sisters, when we come to the christening. Beware not to tell anybody about what has happened to-day! If somebody should ask you about the ring, say that you found it in the woods."

With these words the Lady took a golden ring from her finger, and put it on that of the Young Woman. Then she ate almost half of the strawberries which the Young Woman offered her.

Chattering in a friendly manner they soon reached the borders of the forest and the Lady, saying good-bye, walked into the woods.

The Woman wanted to pick some more strawberries to refill her basket, but to her great surprise, when she shook all the berries from her apron, there were more berries than there had been formerly. At home her amazement still grew, when she found that the bottom of her basket was



all covered with silver coins! What did this mean? The Lady had forbidden her to speak about their meeting, so the Woman thought it advisable to hide the money in her chest, and to save it for "a rainy day."

Half a year later, the Young Woman became the mother of a little girl.

When the christening day drew near, the young mother was much grieved that she had not asked about the dwelling place of the Noble Lady, for she could not send her an invitation.

The sledges of the guests stood all in a row, with shafts turned towards the gate, ready to start for the church, when the jingling of bells was suddenly heard and a beautiful sledge, drawn by two powerful horses, arrived and joined the others. Three Ladies, wrapped in costly furs, sat in it.

"You are on your way to church," called one of them. "Do not waste time, we turn our horses round and will go with you to church; later, on our way back, we will bring our greetings to the young mother."

At church, however, there arose a quarrel between the sponsors and the minister. When the minister asked what name to give the child, one of the Ladies said:

"Maasikas." *

* Maasikas—is an Estonian word and in English means "Strawberry."



"What did you say? Was it Mary, or Madli or Maret?" asked the minister.

"Maasikas," was the answer for the second time. The father of the child, all the guests and the other sponsors gazed in surprise at each other and did not know what to think or say. The minister reminded the Lady earnestly that this was no place or time for jokes, and if she would not give a real name, he himself would give the child, without asking her, a good Christian name.

Blushing with anger the Lady drew a paper from her bosom and showed it to the minister. The minister turned as white as a sheet, and stammered out some indistinct apologies, and christened the child by the name Maasikas, though his hands trembled while performing his sacred duty.

During the ceremony the Lady held the child and later, she handed a gold coin to the minister and a silver one to his assistant.

Returning from the church the Noble Lady at once went into the room where the young mother was, embraced her heartily and introduced her two younger sisters. They all three promised to take care of the child, in case some misfortune should happen to the mother or should she die before the child grew up.

Then each Sister gave the mother a golden box for a christening gift, warning her not to show



them to anybody, and to be careful not to lose the precious things.

Without accepting the cordial invitation of their hosts, to come to the feast-table and to strengthen themselves with food and drink, the Noble Ladies took their leave of the Young Mother.

Now the guests, as well as the child's father, were anxious to know who these Ladies were and what the golden boxes contained. Faithful to her promise the Mother did not betray her secret and said only, that the Noble Ladies were as unknown to her as to the others. But nobody believed that she was telling the truth.

A few days later she went secretly to her chest to see what treasures were hidden in the golden boxes. And what did she find? In each box were only three small pebbles!

* * * * *

When little Maasikas was seven years old, it happened that her mother fell ill and after a few days there was no hope for her life.

On the day after her death, the Fairy Godmother arrived and wanted to adopt the child. But yielding to the pleas of the mourning father, she did not take the child away, but said, that every day one of the sisters would come to see Maasikas. And this really happened; every day the motherless child was visited by one of the Ladies, who



brought her clean clothes, or sweets and all kinds of beautiful toys.

More than a year thus passed. Maasikas' father wanted to take another wife. Two days before the wedding the eldest of the Ladies came and declared that now she was going to take the child with her. The pleas of the father were of no avail. Everything the Fairy Godmothers had given to the child was left in the house, with the exception of the christening gifts—the golden boxes, Maasikas had to take with her.

The Lady took the child by the hand and they went towards the woods. The Father of the child followed them, in the hope of finding the way to the dwelling place of the Fairy Godmothers, which could not be far away, or they would not have been able to visit Maasikas every day.

When the Lady with the child had arrived at a big stone on the border of the forest they suddenly disappeared, as if they had sunk into the ground.

The man hastened to the stone, walked several times around it, searching for footprints, but all in vain and he never saw either the child or its Godmother again.

* * * * *

The story of little Maasikas' life with her Fairy Godmothers must now be told.

Near to the above mentioned stone, close under



the sod, was a seven foot wide and a ten foot long sand-stone, which lifted itself up under familiar footsteps and closed again by itself. All this occurred quickly and no traces were left on the sod, so that to the searchers it naturally seemed that the vanished persons had sunk into the ground or had been carried off by the wind.

Under the sand-stone lid there was a stairway carved out of precious stone. Descending the steps little Maasikas, with her Godmother, entered into a beautiful court, in the middle of which stood a building of purest crystal. This was the dwelling place of the Noble Ladies and it was called the estate of the Rock-Fairies.

Numerous servants were kept busy around the place, many of them were engaged in making beautiful and artistic handiwork. Here little Maasikas lived in plenty and happiness, loved by the Ladies as if she were their own child.

Year after year passed and Maasikas grew into a blooming maiden. When she became sixteen years old, the eldest Godmother, one day, said to Maasikas: "My dear Maasikas, the time has arrived for us to part. You must return into the world. We hope, however, that through God's Grace, our parting will not last for long. You must take with you two faithful servants, and your three golden boxes and in these boxes you will find



everything you would need during your long journey."

In three days Maasikas had to go. The parting was a sad one. Maasikas' grief was not less than that of her Godmothers. The two middle-aged servants, whom Maasikas had never seen before, had to protect her on her journey. A little basket, with the three golden boxes in it, was all that Maasikas took with her.

The pebbles in the golden boxes turned out to be wishing stones, as the servants explained later. With the help of these magic pebbles the travelers were provided with all necessary things—with a coach and horses, a fairy table serving prepared food and with comfortable beds for sleeping.

Even a woman companion appeared according to Maasikas' desire, when she had become lonely and tired from her long journey. Maasikas had only to say: "Companion, step before me!" and a young girl was sitting beside her; and merrily chatting they would continue on their way.

One morning, starting upon their day's journey, one of the servants said to Maasikas: "To-day we shall arrive at the farm of the Famous Magician. You must enter his house and listen attentively to what the Old Magician will teach. His instructions we must follow exactly or we shall never succeed in our plans. One of your pebbles you





THE FAMOUS MAGICIAN TOOK MAASIKAS' HAND

must sacrifice to-day, as a reward for the Magician's advice!"

Before the night had fallen they arrived at the Magician's place. The servants had to carry a heavy money-bag, half filled with silver, half with gold, which was provided by one of the pebbles.

The Famous Magician took Maasikas' hand and examined it carefully. At last he said: "To-morrow your way will lead you into a dark



forest, where you will encounter three animals—a Deer, an Old Wolf and a Bear. Try to fondle the animals, so that they will let you go near to them and then mark each of them with your own sign. Put the silk sash on the Deer's and the leather strap on the Wolf's neck; but on the Bear's claw you must put your own ring, which your mother left you.

"Three days later a monstrous Serpent will attack you. The only way to save yourself will be—to change one of your pebbles into a Northern Eagle. Sit with your servants on the Eagle's back, who will soar high into the air with the swiftness of the wind. There the Serpent will be unable to reach you; he will swallow your horses and your carriage, but this will be his last meal; in seven days he will die, and the horses and the carriage will become free. What will happen next—it is better not to tell, happiness to you and your God-mothers."

On the following day the prediction of the Magician was fulfilled. At first our travelers met in the woods a Deer, then an Old Wolf and at last a Bear, and each of them was marked by Maasikas in the exact way the Magician told her. The Bear as if thanking her, licked her hands and ran back into the woods, grunting happily.

Horrible were the events of the third day! From afar was heard some scraping and hissing,



as if a heavy stack of hay was dragged along the ground. Then the head of the Serpent King with a golden crown came to sight. In an instant Maasikas changed one of her wishing pebbles into the Northern Eagle, as the Famous Magician had taught her, sat with her servants on the Bird's back, the Bird arose swiftly up into the air and soared away. Looking back they saw how the monster swallowed their horses and their carriage, as if they were little mice.

For seven days the Northern Eagle flew with his heavy burden upon his back, resting only by night on the cloud's edge. On the morning of the seventh day the Eagle descended just in time, when their coach, drawn by the horses, drove out of the mouth of the dead Serpent King. Gazing at this miracle they saw an old man and an old woman, both in royal robes, coming towards them. The man wore a leather strap, and the woman a blue silk sash on their necks, which were recognized at once by Maasikas as her own, which she had tied on the Wolf's and the Deer's necks. A little later a sturdy and handsome youth appeared, on whose finger glittered the ring Maasikas had put on the Bear's claw.

The Old Man spoke: "Many thanks to you, Maasikas, you dear Luck-Child, you have saved us from our long imprisonment! Seven hundred



years ago I was a rich King of the South! Here is my wife and that is my son; our three daughters have perished. The wicked Northern King of the Serpents conquered my kingdom and swallowed all my subjects. Then he changed me into a Wolf, my wife into a Deer, and my son into a Bear. The fate of my daughters stays unknown, maybe the Serpent swallowed them too!"

At once it came to Maasikas' mind that her Fairy Godmothers were the lost daughters of the King. According to her wish one of her pebbles was changed into another coach drawn by six horses, for the King and his family. Together they started upon the journey homewards, where the estate of the Rock-Fairies was located. On the third day of their journey the Fairy Godmothers came to meet Maasikas, and it would be a hard task to describe the joy of the daughters, to recognize the King and Queen as their lost father and mother and to be reunited to them after a separation of seven hundred years!

Later Maasikas married the King's Son, who became the ruler in his father's kingdom, as the Old King, on account of his age, refused to rule. The King's three daughters, Maasikas' Fairy Godmothers, also married: but nobody ever learned the secret of the golden boxes, nor where the magic wishing-pebbles came from.



THE WATER DWELLERS

THE WATER DWELLERS



THE WATER DWELLERS

VERY long ago in ancient days it happened that a man, with his little son, was riding over a lake, when the ice was not yet sufficiently firm. In the middle of the lake the ice broke, and down they went, with horse and sleigh.

Under the ice they encountered an angry looking Aged Man, who said: "You came here from the Over-World on purpose, therefore you shall stay here, whether you like it or not. I will give you a gray horse and a sleigh with golden runners. Every autumn you must ride here, make noise and warn the light-minded people of your world not to break our roof, till Vanaisa has made it strong enough. Your son, with the horse, may return home, as he came here as a result of your blunder."



Here the Aged Man seized the reins, put the boy into the sleigh, and immediately they were above, on the ice again. There the Aged Man said: "Do not grieve over the fate of your father, it is very pleasant to live with us! Go home! Only be careful not to lose anything out of your sleigh."

Frightened and overtired as he was, the boy hardly understood the words he had just heard, but he forced his horse to run faster and soon he arrived home. Two large pieces of ice were in his sleigh; he took and threw them out; as they did not break he looked at them more closely, and he found that they were not of ice but of pure silver. Now he was rich and could live very comfortably.

Every year since then, when the first cold covered the lake with ice, the Son of the New-Ice-Rider walked on the banks of the lake hoping, by chance, to see his beloved father. But he never had this good fortune, though sometimes, right under his feet, the ice cracked and heaved, as if his father understood his longings and wanted to talk to him too.

Many years had passed; once a boy, the Son of the New-Ice-Rider was now old and gray and as it was a custom with him he went, one day, to the lake shore again. He walked hither and thither for a long time, absorbed in deep thought about his father; then he sat on a rock and bitter tears were



running down his cheeks. Lifting his eyes he suddenly noticed in the river mouth a silver gate with golden lattice work. He arose, went to the gate and touched it gently with his hand; the gate opened easily. Slowly advancing by a dark passage he came to a second gate, similar to the first one, only it was much bigger. In front of it stood a Dwarf, with a big stone hat on his head; he was clad in armor, wore a copper belt, and held in his hand a seven foot wide hatchet.

"Do you want to see your father?" asked the Dwarf in a friendly manner.

"Yes. Could I not see him and talk with him? Growing older I feel more and more lonesome in the world."

"I cannot and dare not promise you that; besides he is just now on his duty. He is riding—hark!—with the gray horse and golden sleigh under the tender silvery roof of our world—to protect it against the careless riders of your world. But as you happen to be our guest and you dared to come here, then I want to show you our home."

The Dwarf touched the gate with his finger; the gate opened and they entered into a huge and gorgeous crystal building. Old and young, men, women and children were gathered here in multitudes! Everybody seemed busy—walking or talking and joking with each other, so that nobody





"DO YOU WANT TO SEE YOUR FATHER?"

paid any attention to the newcomers. The Dwarf and his guest continued to advance in the huge building. Here all the furniture and the utensils were of silver and of gold; the high ceiling was of sparkling crystal, and the floor of purest copper.

The further they advanced, the brighter and more magnificent became the building and the whole interior shone in a dazzling splendor.

From all this, the Son of the New-Ice-Rider was



dizzy, and he begged the Dwarf to turn back, to which the latter agreed immediately, saying: "It is good that you thought of that in time. The further we should go, the brighter would become the palace; not far ahead from here, the light, the lustre and the splendor are so great that the eyes of no mortal could bear it. There lives our Mighty Ruler, our King, with his Gracious Queen, and his splendid Court."

The Son of the New-Ice-Rider had become more daring and asked: "You said that your Master and his family are living there, but who are then these, whom we see in this hall? It seems as if there would be no end to the chatting of the old, to the joking of the young and to the playing of the children with their gold and silver toys."

"They seemingly belong to our family, though they are not. They are, if I may tell you, the inhabitants of the Over-World, who have gathered here at different times. They all are satisfied with their lot and nobody has ever expressed the desire to return into the old world, though they would never be permitted to go, for they who come here have to stay forever."

"Must I stay, too?" asked the Son of the New-Ice-Rider in alarm.

"Do you not like our home and our life here? But have no fear. You may go or stay as you



choose. I brought you here of your own will and I shall take you out from here if you wish. But that will be the first and the last time a mortal shall be allowed ever to go back to the Over-World."

"Shall I never see my father again?"

"Not unless you come back here three weeks later; then the ice will be older; your father will have done his work for the year and can enjoy his rest-time here, in our company, until the year is over and he shall start his work anew."

"Has he to do this forever? And so every year to be reminded of the misfortune of his life?"

"Who can help it? He must perform this task, year after year, until some careless person from your world shall again break the new winter roof of our building and sink under the ice: then the former New-Ice-Rider will be freed from his duty and the newcomer will have to replace him in performing his work."

Talking thus they had reached the gate; as if questioning, they looked into each other's eyes; the Dwarf, with a friendly smile, gave his companion two copper rods saying: "If you ever should come back to this gate and should not find me here, but somebody else whom you do not know, then jingle with these rods; then I shall come and fulfill your wish, if it is possible."

Now they had passed the big gate and had come



to the entrance gate; the Dwarf opened it, and the Son of the New-Ice-Rider stood instantly upon the shore of the lake at the mouth of the river.

The gate through which he had just passed had vanished; nevertheless the copper rods in his hand were evidence of reality. He put the rods into his pocket, and absorbed in deep thought, almost like dreaming, he reached his home.

But here he did not find peace and nothing pleased him any more. Every day for three weeks he went to the lake shore; there he often sat on the stone as if dreaming, till he vanished without leaving any trace.



**HOW SEVEN TAILORS WENT
TO WAR IN TURKEY**

THE GREAT MINDS
OF THE WORLD



HOW SEVEN TAILORS WENT TO WAR IN TURKEY *

ONCE there lived seven tailors who grew tired of their peaceful needlework. They heard some brave heroes say that a great war had broken out in Turkey and that brave men were needed there.

“We are the proper men! Enough of button-holes. Let us go and bore the bodies of the enemy!” exclaimed the seven tailors in one voice and they straightway decided to go to war and to earn their spurs. They ordered a long spear shaft to be made from the hardest oak-tree; then they took to a blacksmith their seven scissors to be hammered into a spear-head, which was fastened to the shaft. Before going they drew lots who should be

* Among the Estonians, tailors, as a class, are always considered boastful and cowardly.



the leader during their campaign. Then they all stood in a line, one behind the other; the chosen leader headed the procession and was called First-man; the following five received the names: First-strong, Second-strong, Third-strong, Fourth-strong, Fifth-strong and the seventh was called Last-man. They chose these names so that they would know the order in which they had to march. With combined efforts they lifted the huge spear upon their shoulders, with the pointed end resting on the shoulder of the First-man. Each of them put a flat-iron in his pocket to prevent the wind from blowing them away in the open field.

The seven tailors set out on a nice summer morning; they were careful not to miss a meal and whenever they felt tired they rested in the shade of the trees. They were certain that soon they would meet a wise man who would show them the shortest way to Turkey.

As they were crossing a field, First-man and some of the others too, noticed a farm by the roadside. Two men were sent out to investigate and perhaps to procure some additional provisions for their journey. When they returned the two men reported that all they saw were three women and a few children but no men.

First-man cried:



“Warriors must be brave! Let us attack the enemy, although he is so strong!”

With deafening war-cries the seven tailors attacked the farm. At the outset the women were quite frightened but soon one of them, the oldest and the most sharp-eyed of them all, said scornfully:

“Men like these we drive away with broomsticks!” and she seized one forthwith, while the others armed themselves with pitchforks. Thus they stood in the doorway awaiting the approach of the enemy.

“Hold, brothers!” cried First-man, “common sense at times must temper extreme courage; we have only one weapon but they have three; let us rather retreat.”

The six others approved the caution and prudence of their leader and they all took to flight and ran as if their pockets were on fire. After a while Last-man glanced back and when he saw no pursuers at their heels, they slackened their pace, recovered their breath and went on their way slowly.

In the quiet dusky evening a black-beetle flew past the seven warriors; the buzzing of its wings sounded so loud to them that shudders of fear ran down their spines. First-man screamed:

“Comrades, I hear the enemy approaching!” and dropping the end of the spear from his shoul-



der away he fled. The others thought that their lives were worth every bit as much as that of their leader and they all fled, one hiding here, another there and so, hidden, they spent the whole night. Third-strong had happened to hide in a wild rose-bush, the thorns of which pricked and scratched him at the slightest movement. He wept and pleaded for mercy for he was convinced that he was being speared by many enemies.

"Have mercy, dear people! One spear is enough; why do you wound me with so many?"

Finally the poor man could endure it no longer and he made a dash for liberty; he ran until he stumbled and fell over a body, but neither of them moved for fear and both pretended to be dead. Only at daybreak did they recognize each other, Third-strong had stumbled over his own companion, Last-man.

In the morning all the warriors, one after another, crept cautiously from their hiding-places, recovered their spear and ate their breakfast rejoicing to be alive after two such dangerous encounters with the enemy. Suddenly First-man remembered that in cases like this, the roll call must be made to learn if no one is missing. He counted, and counted again; the others also counted in turn, but none could see more than six. The seventh had vanished, which of them, no one could discover.



The reason for this was that they all counted like this: I am I, and then, one, two, three, four, five, six; each of them forgot to count himself.

Then a bright idea struck one of the men; he espied a mud-puddle near by and he proposed that they stick their noses into it to see how many holes would remain in the mud. Having done this, they counted the holes and—oh joy to behold! there were seven holes; but never could they understand how the mistake had occurred.

Much encouraged now, the seven war-like tailors proceeded on their way. After long wanderings they came to the edge of a thick, wild forest into which led a very narrow path. They could make their way through the thicket but very slowly and it was as dark as night. And thus it came to pass that they were not aware of a wolf sleeping in the middle of the path. First-man was about to tread on it, when at the last moment, however, he perceived the beast and screamed:

“Wolf! Wolf!”

He sprang back with such force that all his companions, except Last-man, tumbled to the ground and the point of the spear fell from their shoulders and struck the wolf. The tailors were frantic to make their escape but they were rooted to the spot with terror. Unable to stir a limb, they stood and waited for the beast to devour them one by one.





"MEN LIKE THESE WE DRIVE AWAY WITH BROOMSTICKS"

First-man was nearer the beast than the rest and at last he began to wonder why it did not spring. Wisely he decided that their spear must have killed the sleeping wolf. He ventured a glance and found the wolf really dead. But it was not the spear of the seven tailors that had caused his death; for the wolf had died several days earlier. With a



sigh of relief First-man turned to his comrades, but he was frightened anew when he saw them all lying on the ground, face down. He jumped to the conclusion that he had pierced them with the shaft of his spear when he sprang back so unexpectedly. He began to wail sorrowfully and to lament loudly, whereupon the others, hearing his cries, believed that he was being torn by the wolf. But when his lamentations did not cease, the bravest of his comrades ventured a glance and seeing that the wolf lay still they jumped to their feet with shouts of victory. They discovered that no one was hurt and that they had tumbled to the ground from fear and nothing else. On the body of the wolf not a wound could be found and from its stench the seven men concluded that the beast must have been dead for days. Nevertheless, they decided to take its skin and to carry it on their spear as a trophy, that the whole world might witness the great deeds they had performed.

Towards evening the seven adventurers reached an open field, which was covered here and there with juniper bushes. Here they decided to pass the night. While the others slept, one of them was always on watch.

At about midnight, when Third-strong was on guard he heard a strange noise. In alarm he roused his companions. The men held their



breath and listened. From time to time they heard some strange thud, like the sound of a heavy stone falling to the ground. Some of them even thought they felt the ground trembling under them. But no one would risk to go and find out what it was.

Third-strong, who often appeared sharp-witted enough to solve complicated problems, said:

"I think I know what causes this noise: it is the ghost of the dead wolf walking around."

By and by the noise drew nearer; after some deliberation Last-man undertook to wrap himself in the skin of the wolf and to go upon all fours in the direction whence the noise came; then the ghost would surely retreat since all ghosts were afraid of wild beasts. The others were pleased with this plan; they wrapped Last-man carefully in the skin and to protect him they all followed him bravely, a hundred paces behind. Last-man had not gone far when he saw a monstrous creature with five legs and two huge horns and burning eyes. It made queer movements; leaping clumsily and lifting both its front legs at once; the fifth leg moved from the right to the left, back and forth, as if to balance the movements of the heavy body. Last-man stole noiselessly back and told his companions of the strange sight he had seen.

"Run! Run! Save your lives before it is too late!" he cautioned and they all fled.



In reality, however, if fear had not made him see visions, he would have seen that it was only a horse whose front legs were fettered, to keep it from straying and which was left to graze in the pasture during the night. The supposed horns were the ears of the horse; the unusual fifth leg was his tail, whisking away the flies.

The following day things went quite smoothly for the seven war-like tailors until towards evening they came to a lake. From the steep shores they saw the blue waves rippling over the lake. They held a council how to get across the lake for no boat was at hand. First-man deliberated:

“If one of us possessed the strength of Kale-vipoeg or if he was a good swimmer he could easily carry us across the lake.”

Immediately the others began quarreling as to which of them was the most fitted for this task. In the argument that followed, Fifth-strong pushed Third-strong, behind whom he was standing, from the bank. Frightened, Third-strong rolled down but landed, instead of in dreaded water, in a flax-field all covered with blue blossoms, which the warriors had mistaken for a lake.

When Third-strong found himself lying comfortably and unhurt in the flowering flax he felt braver than ever and called out:

“Whoever dares, follow me!”



First-man pushed two other men down the slope and the rest jumped after them. Finding themselves in the flax-field they all were happy at the success of their venturesome undertaking and relieved that the water they had feared had not even made them wet.

The seven warriors were just preparing to spend the night in a sheltered place in the flax-field when they noticed that a peasant, with a heavy cudgel on his shoulder, came towards them, scolding angrily:

"You rascals! Can you find no other place to idle away your time than my flax-field! Just you wait, you gallows-birds! I shall beat you until your backs are as blue as the flax-blossoms!"

The seven men fled in such a hurry that they had scarcely time to take the spear with them. After they had covered about a mile, First-man said:

"We really could have taught the impudent fellow a lesson if only he had not caught us so unprepared."

Third-strong, however, still shaking with fear, replied:

"You must have forgotten the cudgel he carried! I thank my stars that he did not measure my back with it or he would have broken all my bones. Dear friends, what do you think of turning our steps homewards on the morrow? Who knows



how far the land of Turkey really is and what disasters might befall us before we reach it."

The others approved the thought of going home, very warmly.

"Only," objected First-man, "we cannot return the way we came for the peasant with the cudgel is doubtless waiting for us."

And they all agreed to follow another route.

After a few days' wandering they came to a big lake; this time it was a real lake.

"This is Peipsi-Lake," exclaimed Fourth-strong, who had recognized the place at once, "we must be very cautious because here lives a dreadful Monster; whether it is a bird or a fish or a quadruped I do not know, but old people say that even Kalevipoeg could not conquer it."

First-man urged that happen what may, they must fight the Monster; this deed would bring them greater fame and honor than even fighting the Turks. Sad and oppressed with forebodings, they sat down to eat what might be, perhaps, their last meal. During the meal conversation ran on the subject of death, which seemed to them almost inevitable. Then they began to prepare for the coming great battle. This, however, did not prevent them in the least from talking and quarreling as usual.

First-man, who had been their leader long



enough, thought that it was now high time to cede this post of honor to one of the others, but to this they all objected firmly. Courage they all possessed but their bodies were too weak to keep pace with their courage.

At last Third-strong proposed that the best thing to do would be for one of them to die for his companions and that the leader naturally should make the sacrifice.

"He who knows to give good advice must himself set the example," shouted First-man in answer.

In the end they did not come to any new decision but went, as usual, all together against the enemy. They crossed a plain where a rabbit was hiding; it was watching and now and then it moved its long ears. This sight terrified the seven tailors, who in their excitement mistook the rabbit for the dreaded Monster. They stopped and held a council to decide whether to advance and to slay the Monster with their spear or to run for their lives. They were so terrified that their hair stood on end like the bristles of a pig. At last the leader summoned his courage and said:

"Come, comrades, let us advance against the foe!"

He shut his eyes and rushed onward, shouting with all his might:



“ Hurjuh! Hurjuh! ”

Thereupon the frightened rabbit fled into the near-by wood. When First-man opened his eyes again and looked for the enemy, he saw him running and he shouted triumphantly:

“ He retreats! He retreats! Look, men, look! He runs like a rabbit! But perhaps . . . he is a rabbit? ”

Third-strong objected angrily:

“ Brother, where are your eyes? The animal is at least the size of a foal! ”

Fourth-strong believed that the creature was as big as a horse.

Fifth-strong said:

“ To my eyes an ox compared with this animal is as small as a puppy. ”

Last-man thought that the creature he had seen was bigger than a haystack.

Thus terror magnifies all objects and fear makes a mountain of a molehill.

The seven men could not come to an agreement about the size or the shape of the animal but all agreed that a big and unusual creature it had been indeed.

When the danger seemed to be over the seven men held a council to decide what was to be done next. They felt very proud of the great deeds they had performed on their adventure and they all



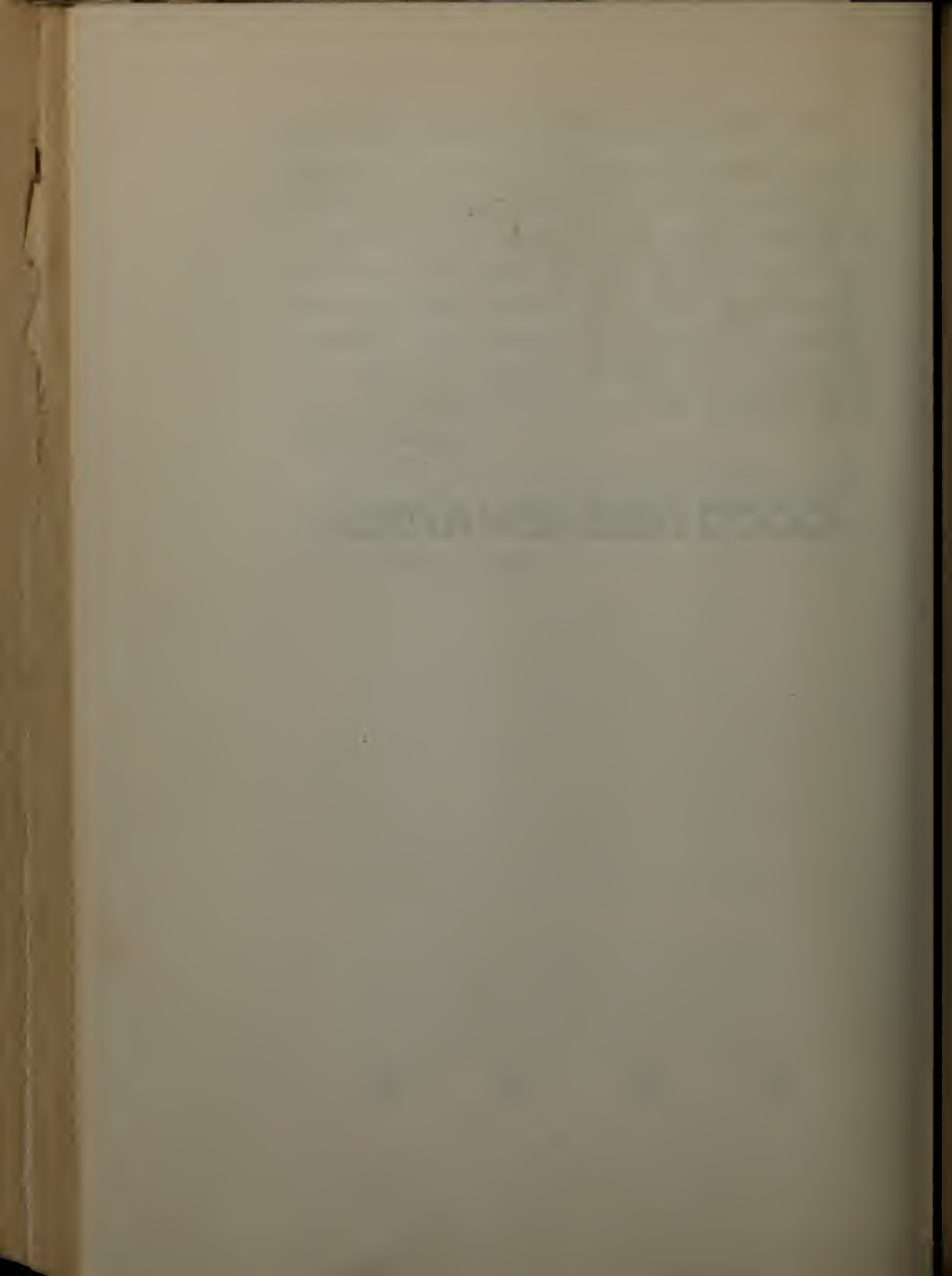
wished to preserve the memory of their deeds for the future; so they took the following resolution:

“Whoever has endured heat and hardships as we seven have done, has earned the right to go home and spend the rest of his days in peace and in honor! Our trophies, the spear and the wolf’s skin shall be suitably preserved for posterity, always to remind all tailors of the deeds we seven have performed.”

Where the spear and the wolf’s skin are now kept no one knows but the fact remains which is conceded far and near, that tailors are always full of valor and courage.



GOOD DEED REWARDED





GOOD DEED REWARDED

THE burning heat of a summer day threatened a thunder-shower. A Young Farmer made haste to rake up the dry hay in his meadow. Luckily completing his work he started on his homeward way, when a threatening black cloud approached rapidly from the South. The man quickened his steps to get home before the rain.

On the border of the forest he perceived a Stranger, with his head against a stump, sleeping soundly. "This poor man will get more watering to-day than he likes, if I do not awake him," thought the Farmer and stepped nearer. "Listen, brother," called the Farmer, shaking him by his shoulder, "if you do not have on a coat of goose skin, then jump up and look for a shelter; a heavy thunder-shower will soon break over us."



The Stranger sprang up, much frightened by the advancing thundercloud; he thanked the Farmer for his kindness. Then he felt in his pockets, as if searching for something, but finding them empty, he turned, a bit confused, to the Farmer and said: "Unfortunately I have nothing with me to reward your kindness, but a day will come when I shall be able to do so. I am in a hurry to escape the shower; therefore listen well and remember what I predict for you. In two years you will become a soldier in the cavalry. After wandering from place to place with your regiment you will settle down for a longer stay in Northern Finland. One day when it shall be your turn to go on guard duty, you will be seized by homesickness. Not far away from your standing place you will notice a crooked birch-tree. Go nearer, knock three times against the tree trunk and ask: 'Is Kõver at home?' Then you will receive the reward for to-day's kindness. And now: Good-bye!" With these words the Stranger hastened away and soon was out of sight to the Farmer, who quickly forgot the Stranger, as well as his predictions.

Later it happened, however, that the first part of the prediction was fulfilled. In two years the Farmer really was enlisted and had to serve in the cavalry.



Four years passed; he moved with his regiment from place to place, until they were stationed in Northern Finland. Here in a foreign country, parted from his friends and his family, an attack of homesickness overcame him often. Tears of longing filled his eyes, when he knew himself alone and unwatched by his comrades.

One day it happened again to be his turn to watch the horses. Sitting alone in the open field and sending his longings homeward, his gaze fell, by chance, on an old crooked birch-tree, not far from him. A strange and overwhelming joy seized him. The days of his childhood and his past arose distinctly to his memory, as if they had happened only yesterday. Rubbing his forehead with his hands as if wanting to arouse more memories, suddenly the meeting with the Stranger in the woods and his speech were recalled. "What harm would result from trying, if I go to the birch and knock against the trunk," thought the man. "Nobody is watching me, who could later mock me."

So thinking he went to the birch, looked around, as if expecting to see something strange or suspicious at the tree, then he took heart and knocked very gently three times against the trunk, asking half stammering: "Is Kõver at home?" No answer came. The soldier's boldness grew, he





"IS KÖVER AT HOME?"

knocked again and much stronger so that the trunk resounded in answer and called with a loud voice: "Is Kōver at home?"

A strong noise arose from the birch and the Stranger stood before him as if borne by the breath of the wind. "My friend," said the Stranger, "it is good that you remembered my promise, and I am very glad to be able now to repay my debt. Children!" he called into the birch, "which of you is the swiftest?"



"I can be as quick as a bird can fly," said one voice.

"Very well," answered Kōver, "but who can be yet quicker?"

Another voice then said: "I can race with the wind."

"May be some other could be even quicker?" asked Kōver the third time.

A thin voice replied: "Father, I can be as quick as thoughts of men."

"Come here, my son!" called Kōver. "To-day I can use you."

Then he put a sack of the height of a person, filled with gold and silver money, before the soldier, took hold of his hat and said: "Soldier made out of the hat! The man with the money-bag home!" At this moment the soldier felt as if his hat flew off his head and turning around to look for it, he found himself at home, among his friends and relatives, and the immense money-bag stood by his side on the floor.

At first he thought that he was dreaming, until he later discovered that his good fortune was a reality.

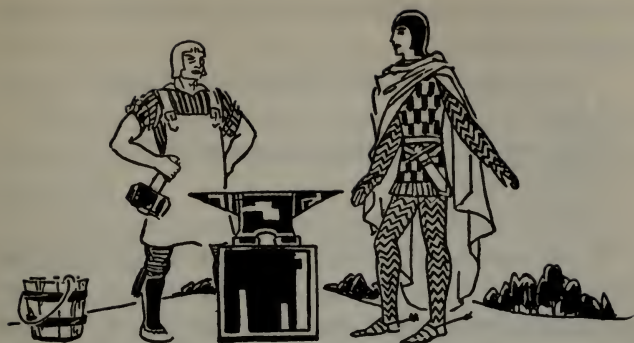
As no inquiries were made about him, the man at last believed that his lost hat had stayed behind to serve instead of him. At his death bed he related his strange story to his children and thought, as



the given money had been of great blessing to him—that the Stranger, who gave it, must have been a Good Spirit.



ACROSS THE SEA OF FIRE



ACROSS THE SEA OF FIRE

THE Ruler of a powerful Kingdom fell dangerously ill. He called his son and thus he spoke to him:

“I feel that my last hour has come and when I die, you shall be King in my place, but there is no one to care for my daughters. It is my dying wish that your first duty should be to see that your sisters marry.”

Soon after that the Old King died.

“Now where shall I seek husbands for my sisters?” the new King mused.

He was impatient to wait till royal suitors came to court his sisters, so he himself rode away in his carriage to find them bridegrooms.

On and on, sped the Young King in his search.



One day he met a Gray-bearded Old Man on the edge of a forest.

"Are you married?" asked the King.

"No."

"Do you wish to marry my sister?"

"Why not?"

"Then come with me."

In his zeal to dispose of his sisters the King did not even ask who the man was, he was so pleased he had found a suitor for his oldest sister. When they came to the palace, the oldest Princess and the strange bridegroom were married at once.

Again the King hurried away to find a bridegroom for his second sister. Soon he returned with another Gray Old Man and like the oldest sister, the second Princess was married without delay.

The youngest and also the loveliest of the sisters was still unmarried. On his travels in search of a husband for her, the King met a ragged Beggar, sitting by the roadside:

"Beggar, are you married?"

"No."

"Then come with me and marry my sister."

"Why not? With pleasure!"

The King hastened to his palace with the ragged Beggar at his side.

The youngest sister was quite scared out of her



wits at the sight of such a lover but the King had no mercy and the beautiful young Princess was soon married to the wretched old Beggar.

When the wedding ceremonies and festivities were over, the Beggar took his bride by the hand and said:

"We must now return to work."

"Whither? What kind of work?"

"Why! To beg of course!"

Full of despair, the lovely Princess followed her husband, as her older sisters had followed their husbands.

Years passed by, but no tidings came from the King's sisters. By and by his conscience awoke; the King deeply regretted that he had acted so rashly, and he began to worry what had become of them. He did not even know where they were. At length he decided to go into the wide, wide world and to return only after he had found his sisters and not before.

On his quick steed, the King rode to the East, so fast that sparks flew from under the hoofs of his horse. But no one had seen or heard anything of his sisters. On the third day he came to a high Mountain of Copper. He tried to climb it, but the slopes of the Mountain were so slippery that at every attempt his horse slipped back.

What was he to do? The King looked around



for help. Riding along at the foot of the Mountain he noticed a blacksmith and asked him if he could tell him how to reach the Mountain top.

The blacksmith answered:

“Your horse is plainly shod; whoever wants to ascend the Mountain, must shoe his horse with copper horseshoes. But why wish to go there at all? True enough, on the top of that mountain is a magnificent Castle of Copper, but its owner does not like foreigners and is merciless to every stranger.”

But the warning of the blacksmith did not frighten the King at all and he said resolutely:

“Give my horse good copper horseshoes.”

Then the King tried again to go up the Mountain and true enough, now his horse did not slip. From far off he saw the Castle sparkling in the sun. Safely he arrived at the Copper Castle, tied his horse to a copper post in the courtyard and entered.

And whom did he see when he entered the first hall? His eldest sister herself! The Princess was overjoyed to see her brother; she greeted him lovingly and said:

“Dear brother, I am so glad you have come to pay me a visit. But I do not know what my husband will say. He is not at home just now but at every minute he may return. Never has he



allowed a stranger in his palace. You must hide and I shall first talk to him. If he has nothing against you, you may come out. Perhaps you do not know who my husband is; he is King of all the little birds."

The King did as he was told and only in time, for a loud flapping of wings was heard from the courtyard. The Princess opened the window and a large bird flew into the room. It fluttered about the room and then shook itself vigorously and behold! All its feathers fell to the floor and a handsome young man stood before the Princess. Not a trace was left of the Old Man to whom the King had married his sister!

The King of the Small Birds looked angry and he frowned as he asked his wife:

"Whose horse is that I saw in my courtyard? Has some stranger arrived?"

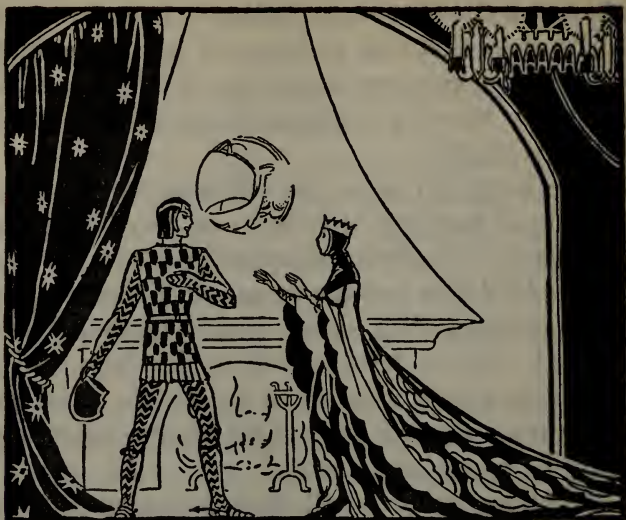
"I have seen no stranger. But perhaps my brother has come. How would you receive my brother if he really paid us a visit?"

"Your brother is always welcome! I would give a great feast in his honor."

At these words the brother came out of his hiding-place, shook hands with his brother-in-law and embraced him.

For three whole days the tables were spread with savory dishes; musicians played their merriest





"YOU MUST HIDE UNTIL I TALK TO HIM"

tunes and for three whole days the dancing went on. Every one ate and drank and there was much rejoicing.

When the feast was over, the King said:

"Now I must go to find my other sisters."

"Give your brother a token," said the Small-Birds-King to his Queen.

"But what shall I give him?"

"Give him the Magic Tablecloth."

"This Tablecloth is strange," said the Princess, as she gave it to her brother. "Whenever you



spread it out on a table, the choicest food, whatever you wish, appears on it by magic."

Then the Princess and her husband went with him down the Mountain into the valley and there bade him farewell, as he rode away to find his two other sisters.

On the third day of his journey he found himself at the foot of the Silver Mountain.

In vain he tried to ascend, and each time his horse slid down hill. From his first experience the King knew that his horse should be shod with silver horseshoes. Soon he found a blacksmith who shod his horse, as he was bidden. Then the King let his horse drink the water, in which the horseshoes were tempered, mounted again and dashed up the hill. Sparks flew wherever the hoofs of his horse touched the silver ground.

High on the Mountain top there stood a stately Silver Palace, flashing in the sun. The King tied his horse to a silver post and entered.

On the threshold his second sister greeted him:

"A thousand times welcome, dear brother!" she exclaimed. "I am so happy to see you! But I do not know how my husband will receive you. He is the King of all the Hawks and he is cruel, as becomes a true hawk. Soon he will be home. Hide yourself, while I learn what he will say to your coming."



Then a loud flapping of wings was heard from outside and the Princess rushed to the window and opened it. A huge hawk flew in, circled about the room for some time and then came down to the floor; he shook himself until the last feather fell off and lo! a handsome young Prince stood before the Princess.

"Whose horse is that, fastened to the post in the courtyard? Who dared come here uninvited? I shall beat every intruder severely."

"My dear husband, would you beat him also, if he were my brother?"

"With your brother it would be quite otherwise! In his honor I should give a festival for six whole days!"

At these words, the Princess called her brother from his hiding-place.

The King of All the Hawks embraced his brother-in-law and shouted joyously:

"Now let us feast and be merry!"

But at last the King began to talk of commencing his journey.

"Your brother wishes to leave us," said the King of All the Hawks to his wife. "You must give him a present."

"But what shall it be?"

"Give him the Silver Bottle."



The Princess presented her brother with the Silver Bottle and said:

“Whenever you feel thirsty, this Bottle will quench your thirst.”

The King returned thanks for the gift, bade them farewell, and away he hastened in search of his youngest sister.

Through woods and marshes, over hills and plains he sped, until one day he stood at the foot of the Mountain of Gold. On its very top shone and sparkled a Golden Castle, almost brighter than the sun itself.

The King looked around for a blacksmith and soon he found one, who shod his horse with golden horseshoes. After his horse had drunk the water in which the horseshoes had been hardened it flashed up the mountain slope like a squirrel, and sparks flew from its hoofs and flames darted from its nostrils. In the courtyard of the castle the King fastened his horse to a golden post and entered.

There on the stairs stood his youngest sister.

“Oh, my dear brother, how happy I am to see you!” she exclaimed, embracing and kissing him warmly. “But I am not sure what my husband will say to you. He is the King of All the Birds! He has strictly forbidden that any one should be received in his absence. What will he say, if he



finds you here? Hide and listen when we talk. If he is displeased with your visit, stay hidden until he has gone to bed and then escape. But if you find he is friendly towards you, come out and greet him."

Hardly had the King hidden himself, when the flapping of mighty wings was heard and a huge bird passed by the castle window. Rushing to the window, the Princess opened it and the bird flew in, circled about the room and then descended. He shook off his feathers and immediately he changed into a young, handsome man.

"What does it mean? I saw a stranger's horse in the courtyard," the King of All the Birds gloomily asked his wife. "Where is the impudent fellow who dared to enter my castle?"

"My dear husband, no stranger has come here! But what would you say if my brother arrived and paid us a visit?"

"I should rejoice to welcome your brother! He accepted me for your husband when I was in the disguise of a poor beggar. In his honor, I should invite my neighbors and friends and hold a grand festival for nine days and nine nights."

Now the King came forth and greeted his brother-in-law heartily.

For nine days and nine nights they feasted and caroused—drank mead and ate honey, while the



bag-pipes played, bonfires burned and couples whirled around in dances.

It seemed as if the merriment and cheer would never come to an end.

But in the end the guests, weary at last, departed for their homes. The host, too, was tired and the King, much in need of rest.

After a long and sound sleep the King of All the Birds, again refreshed, said to his brother-in-law:

"I believe it is time for you to think about marriage."

"Yes, but whom shall I marry? I have no bride!"

"I know the bride for you. A week's journey from my palace is found the Sea of Fire. Beyond the Sea of Fire lives the fairest Princess who has ever lived. She is the proper bride for you."

"Then I shall go and marry her."

"But it is not easy to cross the Sea of Fire. Remember well what I now tell you: When you descend the Mountain of Gold, kill your horse and remove its hide."

"I could never, never do this! Never could I part with my dear steed!" exclaimed the King in distress.

"Then it will be impossible to cross the Sea of Fire," replied the King of All the Birds. "To



succeed in this you must have the hide of your horse. On your way you will come to an old spruce-tree and there you will see an eagle's nest and in this nest seven eaglets. A terrible hail-storm will approach; the heavens will gleam with one continuous flame and thunder-peal will succeed thunder-peal without a pause. Climb up the tree quickly and cover the eaglets with your horse-hide. In gratitude for this, the old eagle will carry you willingly across the Sea of Fire."

When the hour of parting came, the King of All the Birds said to his wife:

"Do not forget to make a present to your brother."

"With all my heart! But what shall it be?"

"Give him the Golden Ball."

"This is an unusual Golden Ball," said the Princess, "when you open it, twelve musicians appear and play to your heart's content. When you want them to cease, shut the ball and immediately they will go back into the ball."

The King descended the mountain slope and though his heart bled with sorrow, he killed his horse, removed its hide, loaded it upon his back and proceeded on foot. He had not been traveling long when he saw a big, old spruce by the roadside, with an eagle's nest among the top-branches, and seven eaglets peeping out.



Just then heavy, black clouds appeared in the sky and icy-cold gusts of wind sprang up. There was wailing and roaring in the fir-tops, and soon the wind lashed his face with the first, sparse, hard hailstones. The Old Eagle was nowhere to be seen.

"This will be a terrible hail-storm, and the eaglets will be sure to get killed," thought the King.

In a twinkling he was up in the tree-top and covered the eaglets with his horse's hide. Then he sheltered himself under the tree.

The storm now became a raging tempest, bending trees and bushes to the ground, uprooting and crushing them, one after the other, snapping branches and scattering leaves everywhere. All the little birds who tried to hide, perished. But the King under the spruce-tree and the eaglets in their nest remained unhurt.

When the hail-storm had passed an enormous Northern Eagle descended and anxiously sought over the nest. Finding it covered with the horse's hide, the Eagle flew into a terrible rage:

"Whoever dared to come, to disturb you here in your nest? I shall beat the rascal to death!" screamed the Eagle.

"It was no rascal, but a kind man," peeped the eaglets. "If he had not protected us, we would



have been killed by the heavy hail-stones, but now we are safe and sound under the horse's hide. The good man is here, under the tree."

At once the Northern Eagle went to the King and said:

"What can I do for you in return for your goodness to my children?"

"Take me across the Sea of Fire."

The Eagle agreed willingly but said:

"Only remember well, you may not look back unless I give you permission."

And high, high into the sky soared the mighty bird, with the King upon its back. Over fields and forests, over valleys and mountains they flew. At last the Sea of Fire lay before them; sixty fathoms high was the fire, sixty fathoms high were the hissing and roaring flames and sixty fathoms rose the smoke over the flames, whirling thick and black towards the clear sky. High above the smoke flew the Eagle with the King. They could feel the hot breath of the fire but it could not hurt them, for they flew so high.

On the fourth day of their weary flight they reached their destination. The Eagle set the King on firm ground and left him.

The people of the city gazed at the stranger in bewilderment and suspecting him a foreign spy, promptly cast him in prison. So it happened that



the King was thrown into the prison before he could have even a glimpse of the Fair Princess, for whose sake he had ventured to come.

He would not touch the food given to the prisoners but he spread out his Magic Tablecloth and opened the Silver Bottle. Then he opened the Golden Ball and out came the twelve musicians and played for him. The King ate and also invited the other prisoners to partake of his feast. After the meal they all began to dance and the prison was as if transformed into a festival hall.

When the news of this spread, a huge crowd gathered to look at the new prisoner. The King of the city and the Fair Princess, filled with curiosity, came to see what had happened. When he learned who the prisoner was, the King of the city ordered his release and invited him to his palace as his own guest.

As soon as she saw him the beautiful Princess fell deeply in love with the royal guest. Soon afterwards a splendid wedding was celebrated, and the dancing and feasting went on for seven whole weeks.

And then one day, just as the newly-married King was wondering how to get home and how to cross the Sea of Fire, the Eagle returned, ready to serve him once more. The happy King, with his lovely bride mounted the Eagle's back, and the



Bird carried them safely over the Sea of Fire straight to the stately palace of the King.

What boundless rejoicing and cheering filled all the kingdom, when their King, whom they had thought dead, returned and not alone, but with a gracious young Queen!



MUSHROOM-GOLD

1870-1871



MUSHROOM-GOLD

ONCE an old woman went into the woods to pick mushrooms. She found a big one and thought to herself: this kind may be worth something—and she broke it off the stem.

Out of the hole in the mushroom stem stepped many wee, wee men. One of them said to her: “Good woman! If you go down this hole, you may be sure you will find your fortune.”

The woman was eager to do as she was bid, but she could not imagine how she could possibly descend.

“You invite me to descend here, but not even a mouse could do that; how then can I?”

Immediately one of the wee, wee men jumped



three times over the mushroom stem. The hole in it began to grow and to expand, until in it a stairway could be seen.

The old woman gazed in great confusion at what had just happened. Presently a little man took her by the hand and led her down the stairs.

Reassured, the woman descended boldly and soon beheld heaps of gold and silver coins before her.

"Take home all the gold and silver you desire," her guide bade her, "and if some day you need some more, come back to us. Only remember: you must keep silent and never breathe a word of what you have seen here to-day."

Straining under the heavy load and all out of breath, the old woman at last entered the garden in which her hut stood.

"Liisi, Liisi!" she called to her daughter, from far off. "Take your shawl quickly and come along with me! Gold, glittering, yellow gold we may have to our heart's content!"

In her excitement the warning of the tiny man had entirely slipped her memory.

Accompanied by her daughter, she ran back to the place where she first had broken the mushroom; here she picked impatiently at the broken stem.





OUT STEPPED MANY WEE, WEE MEN

Presently a wee, wee man appeared and asked what she wanted.

“My dear little man, I have returned for the promised gold! And here is my daughter, she also needs some of it.”

The tiny man shouted something down the stem-hole.

Instantly a multitude of little men came forth.

For a while the little fellows talked to each other



in great excitement. Then they bade the two women follow them down the hole. Here the mother was allowed to take as much of the gold and silver as she could carry.

"And now, begone! Out of our sight!" the little men commanded angrily. "But your daughter must remain here as a punishment for your betrayal of our secret. She must work hard and serve us diligently! It depends upon her work and her behavior whether she can ever return home or not. Now be off!"

At these words the old woman was whisked up to the earth like a bundle of flax. The gold she carried had turned into black soil.

She ran home in panic. Here on her bed where she had left the gold and silver coins, she also found only heaps of black soil.

Now the old woman regretted deeply her disobedience, but nothing was to be done—it was too late.

The fate of her daughter remains unknown to us.



THE MAGIC MIRROR

THE WALKER LIBRARY



THE MAGIC MIRROR

IN olden times there lived a famous King in his splendid capital. His treasures were uncountable and he was considered to be richer than ten other kings taken together.

In spite of all his power and his wealth the King was getting old. But he disliked the thought of becoming old as much as any common beggar.

The King had three sons.

One day he called for his elder sons and said: "I know that I am growing old; my hair is turning gray and getting thin. In my childhood I heard from an old lame woman, that somewhere in the world there was a Mirror, which makes everybody who once looks into it young again. Find me this mirror and half of my kingdom shall be yours! You may take with you on your journey



as much gold as your hearts desire. Be bold and daring and try to find the rare thing! You will make your own fortunes!"

The sons readily agreed to do the King's bidding: "Give us a carriage with six horses and a sackful of gold; we shall find the Magic Mirror, even if the search takes us to the end of the world!"

On the very next day six horses were harnessed, a sackful of gold was put into the coach, the driver sprang to the coach-box, and the Princes were off upon their journey.

The youngest brother heard about the task laid upon his two brothers, and he begged his father, the King, to allow him too to go upon the search for the Magic Mirror.

At first the King laughed at him and said: "What does a boy like you know about the world! You would die at the first milestone, if you succeed in getting out of the capital at all. Go and stroll about in the city, your elder brothers will take care of the matter of finding the Mirror."

But the boy insisted and begged until the King yielded and said: "Go then if you must! But take care of yourself, for I shall not give you either horse or gold."

The Youngest Son thanked the King for this permission and hastened away.



He counted his pennies, they scarcely amounted to ten thalers.

"Happen what may, I will go with this meagre sum, and try my luck! But it is nonsense to go on foot; I shall have to buy a horse."

For his ten thalers he bought an old white horse, which he mounted and started upon his way. As the horse was an old one they made only slow progress, just at foot-pace.

Towards evening he arrived at a big inn and saw the horses of his brothers before the entrance.

"Ohoo! My brothers cannot be far when their horses are here! I shall go in and look for them, maybe we can continue our way together." Seeing him, his brothers, who had been drinking at a table, mocked him saying that they did not want him to accompany them and that he would be only an added burden upon their journey.

Without saying a word the youngest brother left them, mounted his horse and slowly rode away.

The brothers looked laughingly after him: "Let him go! The wolves will take good care of him and of his white horse."

In spite of his brothers' laughter, the Young Prince went on, until he came to a big oak-forest. "I shall ride through it," thought the Prince. Suddenly he noticed a path which led into the forest. "I shall search the woods," thought he,



"for they say wonderful things are always found in the woods."

The path led him deeper and deeper into the woods. "Let us see where we shall come out, old horse!" remarked the Prince. He took a leaf from a tree and began to whistle on it, while advancing slowly.

On the third day of his journey the Prince arrived at a small clearing in the woods and lo! between the trees on the edge of the clearing stood a small hut!

"I must see what is there," and he drew nearer.

At the sound of his approach a little old gray woman stepped out of the hut and exclaimed in astonishment: "Look! A man! I have lived here so long, till one oak-forest decayed and another grew up, but no human foot has yet stepped here. What are you looking for, young man?"

"I came to find the Magic Mirror, which makes everyone young who looks into it. Our King does not want to get old and ordered a search for the mirror all over the wide world. Maybe you, Old Mother, could direct me on the road of my happiness?"

"No, dear son! I am very old, but I have never heard anything about such a mirror. Maybe my elder sister has heard about it. She lives three days



and three nights' journey from here. Ride there, possibly she could give you good advice!"

On the third day of his journey he came to a hut, just as the old woman had said.

Out of the hut stepped a yet older and grayer woman than the first one, and she was even more surprised, when her eyes perceived a man. "I have lived here so long, that two oak-forests have decayed and two others have grown up, but never have I seen a human being. What do you want here, young man?"

The Prince repeated his story and added that he was sent here by her younger sister who told him that maybe she could direct him on his search.

"No, dear boy, I do not know the road. It seems that when I was a child I heard something about such a mirror, but who knows where it can be now. Go on further! After a journey of three days and three nights you will arrive at my eldest sister's; possibly she knows something about this Magic Mirror."

The Prince thanked the old woman for her advice; gave his horse time to feed and rest; refreshed himself by food; after which he continued on his way.

After three days and three nights he arrived at the third hut.



The Prince again related his story and inquired about the Magic Mirror.

"No, little son, the way to it is unknown to me! Only recently I heard that there was such a mirror, but I do not know where it is now. But dismount and come into my house to rest! I shall gather my family together, maybe some one of them will be able to give us the information."

The Prince wondered to see how clean and cheerful the little hut was inside!

The Old Woman took from the shelf a large whistle and went out. She whistled so loudly that the woods resounded. At once the trampling of feet was heard. The Prince being curious ran to the window and looked out. All the wild animals of the forest had gathered around the hut!

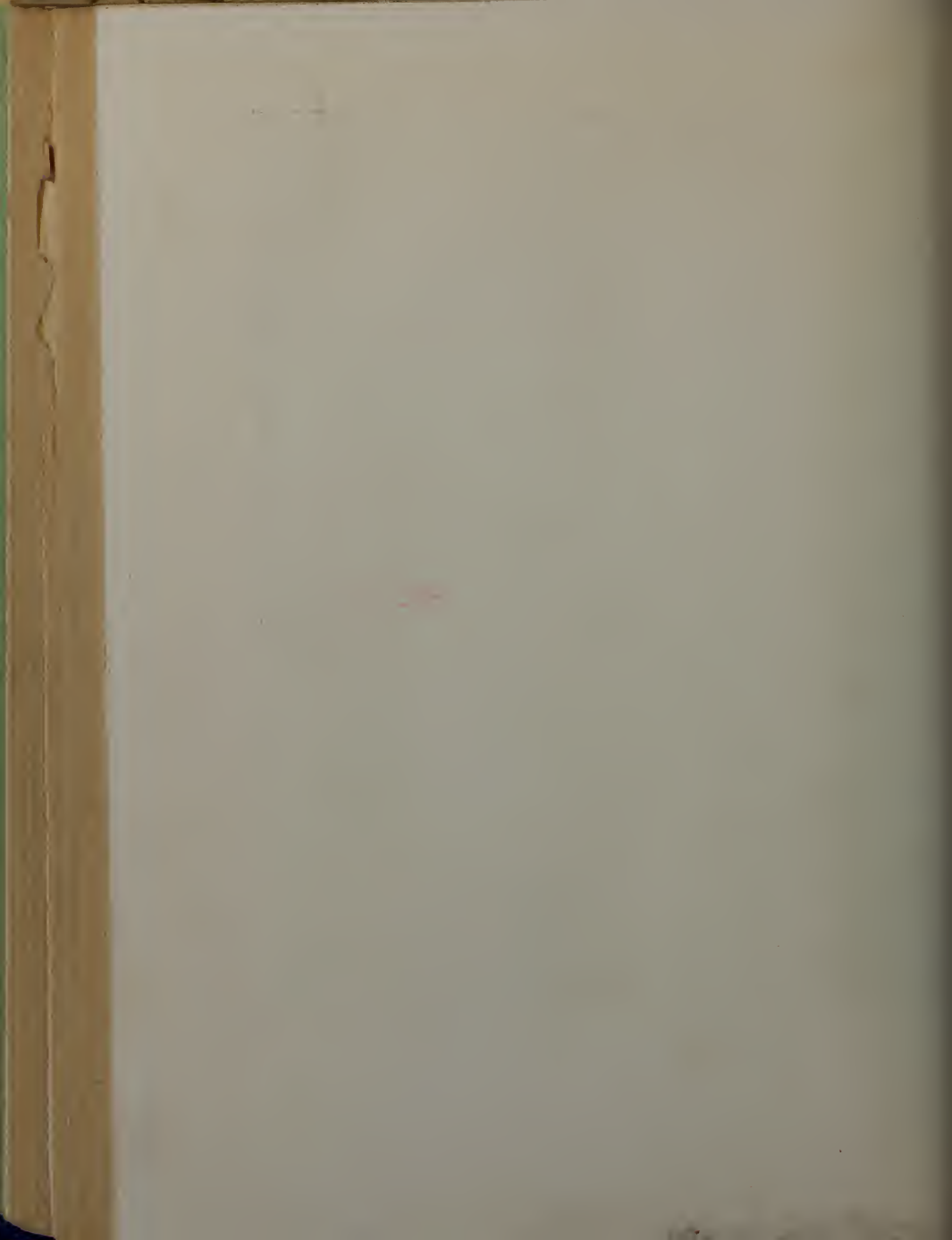
Later when the Old Woman came back into the room, she remarked: "This family does not know anything about the mirror. I must call and ask the others!"

She took from the shelf another whistle and whistled so loudly that the woods resounded. Then arose a rushing and flapping noise, as if the wings of hundreds of windmills were working. The Prince looked out of the window again and saw to his great surprise that all the wild birds had gathered! He hoped that they could give the secret to the Old Woman.





THE BOY BEGGED UNTIL THE KING YIELDED



But when the Old Woman came back she said: "This family did not know anything about the mirror either; but there is one clever man still left; if he does not know about the mirror, then it must have perished or been lost."

With these words the Old Woman took from the shelf the third whistle and invited the Prince to come out and listen as she made her last attempt.

Again she whistled and with such a power that the Prince was quite deafened. Then he heard a noise as if a heavy storm cloud were approaching.

A big two-headed eagle flew nearer and descended on a stone next to the hut; he shook his wings and asked: "What does Forest-Mother want?"

"Little Eagle, my son, do you know where the Magic Mirror is, that makes people young when they look into it?"

"I do know!" was the reply. "It is in a place which no human foot can reach. There, far away in the sea, is a big island, surrounded by rocky reefs, in order that no ship can reach its shores. In the island city, in a strong castle, lives a King's Daughter—she possesses the Magic Mirror."

"Eagle, little son, take this young man on your back, fly with him to the Sea Island and bring back the Magic Mirror!"



The Prince thought: "Happen what may, I will go!"

The Eagle spread its wings, the Prince sat upon its back and they flew away. The Forest-Mother set free the Prince's horse so that it could now graze on the young grass, while his master was riding with the Eagle.

The air-ride was very long. The Eagle flew for nine days and nine nights without halting. On the evening of the ninth day they reached the city on the Sea-Island.

The Eagle began to instruct the Prince: "Tonight you must get into the castle and find the mirror. Remember not to stay long, or great misery will befall us both. The mirror is under the pillow of the King's Daughter. Take it and hurry away! Do not be afraid that you will awaken her—at midnight her sleep is so heavy that even stamping of horses could not awaken her."

Saying that, the Eagle pulled out two of its feathers and gave them to the Prince: "At the entrance you will find two bears guarding it. Throw each of them one feather and go on without fear. Now make haste!"

The bears at the gates, seeing the approaching Prince, arose, ready to attack him. But as soon as he threw them the feathers they lay down and fell asleep.



In the castle everybody seemed asleep. But the rooms were lighted as if the noonday sun was shining. The Prince succeeded in finding the mirror, he seized it and hid it in his bosom and wanted to hasten away, as a table, set with dainty dishes and exquisite wines, attracted his attention.

"It will not take much time! I have to refresh my wearied body, then go," thought the Prince. And he did, greatly enjoying both food and drink.

Before going he wanted to have a look at the King's Daughter. Beautiful she was! He gazed and gazed, but it seemed that his eyes could never dwell too long upon such a sight!

A sparkling ring on her finger was glittering like the sun.

"If no misfortune would happen I would take this ring as a souvenir," thought the Prince. Then he took the ring very cautiously, hurried out of the castle, passed the bears and safely reached the waiting Eagle.

The Eagle scolded him for being so late, seized him by his coat with its beak, threw him over his back and flew away with him. In the same moment the bears awoke, sprang up and growled, ready to run after them, but it was too late, the Eagle and the Prince were beyond reach.

During their flight homewards over the sea, the Eagle suddenly seized the Prince with his beak



and dipped him, up to his knees, into the sea. Then he lifted him up again and continued the flight.

This was repeated twice—dipping the Prince up to his breast and the last time up to his throat, and every time this was done the Prince screamed with horror.

When the Prince had recovered his breath, they were flying over land again and the Prince asked why the Eagle had dipped him thrice into the sea; he said that it made his heart tremble like an aspen-leaf with fear.

“I did it on purpose to make you understand how I felt while waiting for your return from the castle. At first when you began to look around in the castle my feeling was similar to yours when dipped into the sea up to your knees, the bears then lifted their heads, and the charm of my sleeping-feathers grew weaker. The second time when you ate and drank at the King’s table, I was frightened just as you were when dipped into the water up to your breast, then the bears were already sitting up. The third time, when you stretched forth your hand for the ring my fear reached its highest point, as the bears then arose. If the King’s Daughter should have awakened, the bears would then have torn me into pieces, and you would not now be alive.”





HE INVITED HER TO VISIT HIS ISLAND

The Eagle with the Prince now returned to the Forest-Mother's hut.

The Prince thanked his faithful guide, the Eagle, and showed the Magic Mirror to the Old Woman. "It will not do me good any more, I am too old already," remarked the eldest Forest-Mother. "Here, son, take this bunch of rods! Only wave with it and everything will happen just



as you wish!" She returned the Prince's horse and sent him on his homeward way.

When he arrived at the hut of the second sister, he showed her his Magic Mirror. She also said: "It will not help me any more, I am too old for that. Here, good child, take this sack with you! Whenever you shall be in need of grain, then open the sack."

Again the Prince took leave and hastened homeward as quickly as his old horse could carry him.

He stopped at the youngest sister's hut and showed her the mirror as well as the gifts. "This mirror will not help me any more, because I am too old!" she said just as her elder sisters had done. "But here, dear child, take these scissors with you. Whenever in need of clothes, then clank the scissors!"

Not far from his home the Prince was surprised to find the horses of his brothers tied at the door of the same inn where he had left them.

He entered.

"Well, little brother, did you find the mirror?"

"Why not! I found it!"

Then the brothers invited him to join them, to eat and drink with them. "Show us your Magic Mirror. Who knows, maybe it is not the wanted thing at all," they insisted.

When they were assured that it was the real one



they had no idea of returning it to their younger brother and only mocked him, when he asked for it, saying: "What are you, little brother, going to do with such a precious thing?—Let us take it now and go," said the eldest brother to the second, "for here we have our good luck."

So they went on and they threatened to give the youngest Prince a good thrashing, if he did not keep his mouth shut.

The old King rejoiced greatly upon receiving the Magic Mirror. And strange to say while he was looking into it, he began at once to grow younger and younger!

The King thanked his sons for having fulfilled his order so promptly and promised to give them the half of his kingdom.

Soon the youngest son came home too. He went to the King and said: "I found the mirror. The brothers did not go anywhere, they only sat in the inn and took from me the mirror, when I was returning from my journey."

"Such a fool!" exclaimed the King.

When the King heard the story about his adventures, how the Eagle had guided and carried him on its back, he fell into a passion of anger, for he thought that the youngest Prince was a boaster and a liar. The King decided to punish him for his lie and gave his elder sons the order: "Put him



into a boat, take away the oars, and push him into the sea!"

This time the brothers fulfilled the King's order willingly. They sneered at the unfortunate Prince from the shore: "Now, little brother, call the Eagle for assistance!"

The poor Prince in his little boat was swinging like a nut-shell on the crest of the waves, which carried him further and further into the open sea. After a long time had passed, a big wave suddenly came, lifted the little boat up as if on the roof of a building and cast it with force upon the shore.

When the Prince had recovered his senses after such a shock he began to inspect his new surroundings. He saw clearly that the wave had cast his boat upon the shore of an island.

"What shall I do in this desert land!" he complained and began to pull up his boat on the shore. While pulling the boat, he felt something in his bosom. He took it out: it was the bunch of rods, the gift of the eldest Forest-Mother.

"I had quite forgotten the gifts of the Forest-Mothers! Let me see did they tell the truth."

He waved with the bunch of rods and called loudly: "Let there be here a big city with many people in it!"

Hardly had he pronounced these words, when the city stood before him and multitudes of people



were moving to and fro. But all the poor creatures were naked.

"Why, I have the scissors in my pocket!" thought the Prince, and he took out the tailor's implements, began to jingle them and called: "Little scissors, make clothes for the city people!"

Hundreds of cartloads of clothes appeared at once. All the people had to do was to take them and put them on.

Then he used the gift of the third sister to provide food for the city people. As he opened the sack so much grain began to stream out of it, that the population of ten kingdoms could be fed with it.

The Prince was chosen to be the King of this city. They all lived in plenty, a quiet and happy life.

One day the Young King went for a walk to the seashore; far on the sea he noticed a sailboat. "Wait, wait, where is my boat?" thought the Young King as he pushed his old boat into the water and rowed in the direction of the sailboat.

When he came up to the sailboat he recognized in it the beautiful King's Daughter from the island in the sea! He greeted her cordially and invited her to visit his island and to get some rest on the shore.

"I do not dare to stop," answered the King's



Daughter, "a few years ago the Magic Mirror, which possessed the power to make everybody young who looked into it, was stolen from my palace. I am not so sorry for the mirror as for my ring which the thief stole at the same time. Who possesses now the Magic Mirror has to keep it and may stay young for hundreds of years. But I do not dare marry anybody else, but the possessor of my ring. It is possible that the ring is in the hands of a worthless person or a wicked sorcerer and that is the reason why I left the island and am now living on the sea, so that the ring could not be brought to me by a monster, who also would claim me then for his wife."

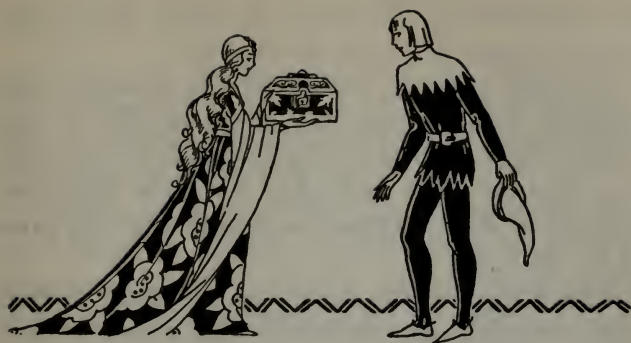
Great was the joy of the King's Daughter when the Young King returned the ring to her. She gladly accepted the young and handsome King as her husband. They went to the shore and were met with great rejoicing by the city people.

Then the wedding feast was celebrated, which lasted for many days.

What has become of the Magic Mirror? Nobody knows.



THE NORTHERN FROG



THE NORTHERN FROG

IN ancient times there dwelt in the Northern lands a horrible gigantic Monster, called the Northern Frog. His body resembled that of a bull but his legs were those of a frog; the front legs were short and the hind legs long; he leaped like a frog, with every leap covering a distance of three miles. His tail was sixty feet long. His whole body was covered with steel scales which made him invulnerable against all possible injuries.

All who could, fled in terror before the Monster for wherever he passed, all living things perished. And it was believed that if nobody stopped his advance, the Northern Frog would gradually devour all the living creatures in the world.

Fortunately he did not advance very rapidly



but remained in one place for years, until there were no more living things around.

Unusual was the power of his piercing and brightly shining eyes; they shone equally by day and by night. Whoever chanced to look into them was doomed as if bewitched by some unknown charms to throw himself willingly into the jaws of the Monster.

The Kings of the Northern countries offered high rewards to any one who would kill the Northern Frog and thus free the lands from the constant menace. All attempts, however, failed; even fire had no power over the Monster.

There was a belief among the people and it was rumored far and wide that only one thing could be effective and that was the Seal-Ring of the wise King Solomon. On this seal, so it was said, there were engraved many secret signs and among others, the inscription telling how to conquer the Northern Frog.

But in whose hands was the Ring? Where was it to be found? Who would be able to read its inscriptions? These questions no one was able to answer.

Finally a fearless and adventurous Youth offered to find the mysterious ring of King Solomon for the King and the people of his country. His stars



and his good luck would guide him, thought the Youth.

Setting off on his adventures, he went straight to the East, for he had always heard that the greatest wisdom and deepest mysteries were known to the Magicians of the East.

Years passed by in his wanderings but he was no nearer his goal than he had been when he set out, until one day he met a famous Sage of the East, who advised him to learn the language of the birds and to follow their clever guidance, for the little birds possess much wisdom unknown to men.

The Sage kindly invited the Youth to remain with him for a few days, that he might help him in his quest. The Youth gladly accepted the invitation. Every day he took seven spoonfuls of a magic potion which the Sage himself prepared from different magic plants. The result was so effective that in a few days the Youth could understand well what the birds chirped and chattered to each other.

At parting, the Sage reminded the Youth that should he succeed and find the coveted ring, he should come back to him since no one else in the world could explain the signs on King Solomon's Seal-Ring.

Continuing upon his way, the Youth was now greatly encouraged and did not feel lonely, as be-



fore, because now he found the woods strangely animated. From the twittering and piping and chirping of the feathered-folk, he obtained much useful information.

So it came to pass, that one evening, 'dead-tired with heat and exhausted by the day's journey, he sat under a tree in the wood to refresh himself with food, when the chatter of two bright-plumed birds attracted his attention. From their talk he learned that the lost Ring of King Solomon could be found only with the help of a mysterious being, the Hell-Maiden. Even if she herself did not possess it, she certainly would know where it was.

"Easier said than done! But where is the Hell-Maiden to be found? She has no permanent dwelling, and to-day she lives here, to-morrow there," objected one of the birds.

"In three days she will be in this neighborhood to wash her face in a near-by spring. For once in every month, at night, when the moon shines full, she must do this to keep herself eternally young and beautiful," replied the other.

And since the spring was not far from the tree on which they perched, filled with curiosity, the two bright-plumed birds agreed to go to the spring on the first night of the full moon to watch the mysterious face-washing of the Hell-Maiden.

The Youth decided to follow the birds and let



them guide him to the spring. For two days he waited under the tree and watched them closely because he feared they might fly away when he was asleep. But the birds only fluttered around the place, hopping from tree to tree and hunted for food.

At noon on the third day they set off southward. Fortunately for the Youth, the birds did not travel swiftly; now and then they stopped and rested on the tree-tops so that he never lost sight of them. At last they came to a small clearing in the wood and perched on the branches of a big tree, while the Youth sat under it and waited impatiently for the coming events.

Soon night came, the evening sun set behind the trees, the dusk grew denser and already the rising moon showed its pale face over the horizon. When the moon was high in the sky, a light rustle was heard in the wood. Then a graceful, lovely maiden hastened to the spring in the midst of the clearing; she moved so swiftly that her feet seemed not even to touch the ground. When she reached the spring she looked up to the moon and uttered these magic words:

“Bright and full-faced, as you are,
Let my beauty last forever.”

Then she washed her face in the spring; again



looked up to the moon, repeating the same words. This she did nine times, and then walked around the spring nine times, singing a little song:

“ Let the Maiden bloom forever
And her face not fade nor wrinkle;
When the pale-faced moon is waning
Let my beauty only grow
And my pleasures last forever ! ”

Drying her face with her flowing hair, the Maiden prepared to go when she noticed the Youth under the tree. She turned to him and said:

“ You deserve to be punished for coming to this solitary place, where no mortal foot has ever trod before. This time, however, I shall forgive you since you are a stranger here. Only you must tell me frankly, who you are and what has brought you here.”

“ I humbly ask your forgiveness, beautiful Maiden, for I had no intention to offend. In my wandering I chanced to come to this pretty place and decided to remain here for the night. When I saw you coming I thought I would not trouble you, if I kept quiet.”

Kindly the Maiden invited him to follow her, and be her guest. It would be much pleasanter to sleep on soft cushions, than here in the open, on the cold, dew-bespangled grass.



The Youth was uncertain whether to refuse or to accept, when he heard his guides, the birds, chatter in the branches, saying it would be folly not to go but that he must be cautious and remember well not to give even one drop of his blood should he be asked for it.

The Youth marked well what he had heard and then he followed the Maiden. After a while they came to a stately palace, which was surrounded with a magnificent garden. They passed through a row of splendid chambers and halls, of which each new one was more magnificent than the last. Hundreds of candles, in costly candelabra and chandeliers shone brightly and cast a dazzling light around. In one of the rooms an exquisite supper was laid for them. They sat down at the table, the Maiden on a golden chair, the Youth on a silver chair. Pretty servant-girls, in flowing white robes, fluttering noiselessly around, waited upon them.

After the supper the Hell-Maiden and the Youth spoke for a while, until they were reminded by a woman, all dressed in red, that it was bedtime. At once the Maiden withdrew and the Youth was ushered to an elegant room, prepared for him. He was never sure whether it was only in his excited imagination or did he really hear strange sounds



and voices around his bed, repeating the warning of the birds:

"Give no blood! Give no blood!"

These words terrified him, and almost made his heart stop beating.

On the next day the Hell-Maiden invited him to prolong his stay at her palace and to enjoy the pleasures of life, for here all days were holidays. And she added:

"Never before had the thought of marriage come to my mind but from the first moment that I saw you, I conceived a liking for you. If you feel as I do, then let us marry immediately. I am enormously rich, I can fulfill all your wishes and it lies in my power to make you the happiest man in the world."

The warning of the birds, the mysterious voices he had heard and the name Hell-Maiden which the birds had given her, made the Youth very suspicious and careful in his dealings with her. He, however, gladly assented to prolong his stay at her palace, in the hope of finding some traces of the coveted Ring. So he asked her to give him time to consider her proposal, to wait until they were better acquainted, since to rush headlong into marriage would be mere folly.

"By all means! Take your time and think it over," agreed the Maiden.



After that she took her guest through her palace, showed him her treasure-chambers, guarding enormous fortunes. In her heart she hoped that the sight of her wealth would impress the Youth and induce him to hasten his decision.

At this moment the Youth did not know that everything he saw here,—the magnificent building itself, the garden and all the treasures, were not real, but only an illusion, a mirage, produced by magic spell. With the help of the Seal-Ring of King Solomon she was able to build such palaces at any time and at any place she pleased and all this could be made to vanish again, without leaving a trace.

In a few days the confidence of the Hell-Maiden in the Youth was so complete, that she took him to a secret chamber which he had not seen before, and she entrusted to him her greatest secret. She showed him a golden jewel-chest, which in itself was a masterpiece of art, and said:

“Here lies my treasure of treasures! It is the most precious thing in the world. It is a ring and you shall have it if you marry me. But in exchange and in pledge of our everlasting love, you must give me three drops of blood from the little finger of your left hand.”

Although these words chilled the blood in the veins of the Youth, he skilfully concealed his emo-



tion, and asked most indifferently about the powers this ring possessed.

The Hell-Maiden explained:

"The powers of the Ring are numerous and no living being has yet been able to decipher all the secret signs on it. But even with my limited knowledge I can perform marvelous things and great wonders.

"When I put it on the little finger of my left hand I can mount high up into the air and fly, like a bird, whither I wish.

"When I desire to become invisible I only have to put the Ring on the ring-finger of my left hand.

"Placed on the middle finger it makes me invulnerable against all weapons and even against the elemental powers; fire and water cannot harm me.

"Placed on the index finger it gives me the power to perform all sorts of wonders.

"On the thumb of my left hand it gives me enormous strength, and I can easily crush rocks and earthly strongholds.

"These powers of the Ring are known to me but as I told you, not all the signs on it have yet been explained.

"This is the famous Ring of the Wise King Solomon, given to him by an angel, as the Legend tells us. But it remains unknown who had made



the Ring—whether mortal hands or the powers of heaven,” the Hell-Maiden concluded her story.

Now the Youth was eager to get a glimpse of the Ring and a burning desire to have it possessed him with new force. Pretending disbelief in what she had told him of its strange powers, he at last succeeded, by flattery and deceit, to induce her to open the jewel-chest. Not suspecting any harm, she took the key from her bosom and unlocked the golden chest. There it lay, the wonder of wonders, the Ring, shining brightly, like the sun.

The Hell-Maiden began to demonstrate some of its powers. She placed it on the middle finger of her left hand and immediately she became invulnerable; she bade the Youth to take a dagger and strike her with all his might. At first the Youth objected, but when she insisted, he obeyed and really tried to stab her, but in vain—she seemed to be protected by an unseen wall of steel against his heaviest blows. Then she put the Magic Ring on her ring-finger and instantly became invisible, but reappeared shortly and stood smiling before him again.

“Let me try, too!” begged the excited Youth.

With no thought of doubt in her mind, she willingly handed him her greatest treasure.

And the Youth began now, in his turn, to test the wonderful powers of this strange Ring. With



its help he protected himself against the heavy blows of the Hell-Maiden. Then placing it on his thumb, with one blow he split a colossal rock into a thousand pieces.

Truly the Ring performed miracles and the Youth thought to himself:

"A fool I would be, not to seize luck by the horns; once gone, it may never return."

In the twinkling of an eye, the ring was on his ring-finger and suddenly he vanished from sight. Then, some distance away from where the Hell-Maiden stood waiting, he placed the Ring on his little finger, mounted high, high into the air and away he flew.

"A truce to jesting, my friend! Come back now!" called the Hell-Maiden.

But the Youth was already far away, out of her reach.

"O the cruelty of it! You vile cheater! You scoundrel!" she exclaimed, and she wailed bitterly over the disaster he had brought on her. And in her rage she uttered angry threats, invoking the most terrifying vengeance upon the cheater.

In the meantime the Youth sped on and on. He flew one day, he flew another, whizzing through the air like an arrow, and on the third he reached the home of his friendly adviser, the Great Sage of the East. The Sage rejoiced over the Youth's suc-



cess, and immediately began the work of deciphering the engraved secret signs on the Magic Ring.

For seven weeks the Sage worked incessantly. Then he summoned the Youth.

"Mark well what I am going to tell you!" he said, and told him exactly what he must do to conquer the gigantic Monster, the Northern Frog.

The Youth thanked him gratefully and promised to repay some day all that the Sage had done for him.

"I enjoyed the work greatly, and since through it I have acquired valuable Magic Wisdom, no other reward is needed," replied the Sage.

"Farewell then, my Great Teacher! My thanks and blessings upon you for your kindness and your help!" exclaimed the Youth and thus they parted.

In a few weeks he reached his home. The journey, which had previously taken several years could now be made easily in this short time by the use of the Magic Ring.

But what great commotion and alarm reigned at his home! The people were terror-stricken and out of their wits from fear for the Northern Frog was near at hand.

The Youth hastened to the King and asked to be provided with all the things necessary for his coming great battle with the Monster. Everything was done just as the Sage had advised. First of all, a



colossal iron horse was cast by the best and most skilled artisans of the Kingdom. Wheels were fastened under each hoof, so that the iron horse could be moved easily back and forth. Then a very thick iron spear, fourteen feet long with sharp pointed ends, was forged. To the middle of the spear were attached heavy chains, strong enough to hold the Monster.

Hundreds of men could not move the iron horse, neither could they lift the heavy spear, but the Youth did this alone with the aid of the Ring.

The Monster was only about six miles distant when all these preparations for the great battle were at last finished. Then the Youth mounted the horse, pushed it along with the help of the spear and thus, proceeding slowly, he met the Giant, the Northern Frog. When the Frog noticed the advancing iron horse, he opened his dreadful jaws very wide, ready, as usual, to devour his prey.

Then the Youth, trembling with fear, hurled his spear into the widely opened mouth of the Monster. The blow was so powerful that it pierced the jaws and the throat of the Frog. Like a flash of lightning, the Youth jumped from the horse and only in time to save his life, for the wounded Monster, furious with rage and pain, snapped his jaws and crushed the iron horse with his hideous teeth.



Then came a thunderous roar; again and again it echoed through the air. The earth trembled. The Northern Frog had received its death blow.

The Youth sprang to fasten the chains to massive iron stakes fixed firmly in the earth.

Chained to the ground the wounded Giant was now helpless and could do no harm. For three days and three nights he suffered before he died.

The great deed was done! The triumphant Youth had done alone, with the help of King Solomon's Ring, what whole armies had failed to do! Great was the rejoicing in all neighboring countries and feast followed feast. Everywhere the Youth was regarded as a hero and the King willingly gave him his daughter in marriage.

But the great festivities were not yet over, when a new danger arose; in the general rejoicing they had forgotten to bury the carcass of the dead Monster, which now gave out a terrible stench so that no one could go near. A disease broke out of which many had already died.

What was to be done? No one knew and general panic spread in the Kingdom. Again all eyes looked for help to the Youth, the son-in-law of the King. And the Youth, straightway, with the aid of the Magic Ring, hurried to his friend, the Sage of the East to seek his advice in this new trouble.

But alas! This time things did not go as





HE LED THEM TO THE CAVE IN THE ROCKS

smoothly as before. He had quite forgotten the Hell-Maiden and all his injustice to her. A clever proverb says: "As you have brewed, so you must drink" and "ill gotten wealth never prospers." And so it really happened; the day of reckoning came and the Youth was severely punished.

For the Hell-Maiden did not rest until by the aid of her magic she was well informed of every



event in the life of the Youth. When she learned that he was now speeding towards the East in the shape of a bird, to seek the advice of the Great Sage, the Hell-Maiden, in the form of an eagle, waited impatiently for his coming. The wonderful Ring hung on a ribbon around the bird's neck. In the twinkling of an eye, the eagle swept down on the bird with the swiftness of an arrow shot from a bow, clutched him in her claws and before the poor bird could recover from surprise, the eagle had snatched the Ring from his neck and they both shot downward to the ground, where they stood again in their human forms, facing each other.

"You cheater! You scoundrel! At last I have got you!" shouted the Hell-Maiden. "With deceit and theft you repaid my kindness but now you are at my mercy and I shall have my revenge."

"Have mercy! Forgive me!" begged the Youth, "with all my heart I repent of the wrong I have done."

But the Hell-Maiden was firm, like a rock, in her determination that he must suffer punishment for his crime. She placed the Ring she had regained on the thumb of her left hand, lifted the Youth up, as if he were but a handful of flax and carried him far away to a solitary gloomy cave in



the rocks. Here she chained him firmly to a heavy rock, leaving not the slightest hope for escape.

"Enchained to this rock you shall remain for the rest of your days and here you shall repent of your treachery," said the Hell-Maiden, as she left him. Every day the unhappy Youth received some food, scarcely enough to keep him from starving.

In the meantime, his bride and her father, the King and all the people of his country, were greatly disturbed, when time passed by, and they received no news of the Youth. The King summoned the most famous Magicians from far and from near, hoping to learn where his son-in-law tarried so long. The Magicians could only say that he was alive, but that a great calamity had befallen him. At last a celebrated Magician of Finland told them that the Youth was the prisoner of a sorceress somewhere, far, very far away in the East.

Straightway a search party was sent out to find him. On their wanderings in the East, they chanced to meet the Great Sage, the benevolent helper of the Youth. The Sage himself joined the searchers in their quest and by the help of his secret wisdom, which he had obtained from the inscriptions upon King Solomon's Ring, he was able to lead them in a few days to the cave in the rocks.



But what a pitiful sight their eyes beheld! Of the sturdy, handsome Youth there was left but a shadow of his former self, so worn and weak he was! For seven long years he had been pining away in this solitary cave.

By the use of his magic the Sage set him free, led him to his own house and there nursed him and tended him, until he was quite recovered and fit to start on his homeward journey.

There he arrived on the very day that the Old King died and with one voice he was chosen King, now the Old King was no more.

As after the rain comes the sunshine, so after years of suffering came days of happiness for the New King and his gracious Queen; they lived undisturbed, loved and esteemed by their subjects, to the end of their days.

But the Miraculous Ring of the Wise King Solomon has never since been seen again by mortal eyes.



THE CLEVER PEASANT GIRL



THE CLEVER PEASANT GIRL

ONCE on a time there lived a very clever King. He intended to marry, but only a girl as clever as himself. It was not an easy task to find such a woman! For years he searched among the daughters of the kings and princes; many of them were charming to look at, but talking to them he soon discovered their dullness and his decision was that all of them had "long hair and short minds."

In his search the King turned his attention to the daughters of the nobility and gentry, but again he did not hear them utter one clever word. Horses and dogs were the only things they seemed to know how to talk about.

The daughters of the common citizens were next



to be tested. He did not care that they were not of noble birth, sense was the only thing that mattered. They all were good housekeepers, sewed skilfully, sang like larks and were good cooks, but in answering the questions he asked them, they stood helplessly like calves behind the gate.

The peasant girls were the last to be tested.

It happened at that time that a peasant's horse was seized in the King's grain fields. The horse was detained and the peasant fined. The peasant came to the King to ask for mercy. "You will be forgiven only if you solve me two questions. If not, the horse will become mine and you yourself will get whipped," was the King's reply.

The King's questions were: "How long is the road to heaven? How big is the moon?" In two days the peasant had to be back and to give the answer or to receive his punishment.

Much troubled the man returned home. The questions seemed to him too difficult to answer. To lose his horse and to take the flogging seemed to be the only outlet.

At home his daughter consoled him, at once finding the right answers.

The King was much surprised when asking the man next day: "How long is the road to heaven?" he received the quick reply: "The Saviour said to the robber upon the Cross: 'To-day thou shalt



be in paradise with me!' Consequently the road to heaven is one day's journey."

"That is right, but now tell me how big is the moon?" asked the King.

"Four quarters."

The King could hardly believe that a simple peasant was able to solve these questions, for he had asked them many times before from the nobility and high officials, and nobody had been able to give the answers.

On the King's inquiry the peasant confessed frankly that his daughter had helped him. His guilt was forgiven.

The Peasant Girl's cleverness did not escape the King's mind and he thought: "If this girl is so clever she may be fitted to become my queen!"

Upon the next day the King visited the peasant's hut. The man was not in, but his daughter, a pretty, lively young girl, received the King.

The King asked: "Where is your father?"

"Father went to make better out of good."

"Where is your mother?"

"Hunting in the birch-grove. What she catches—she kills; what not—she brings home."

"Where is your sister?"

"She is turning her back to the wind."

"Where is your brother?"

"Neither on earth nor in heaven."



"You are giving me real riddles to solve."

"The King likes riddles: he gave riddles to solve to my father."

"But can you explain your riddles yourself?"

"Let us see!"

"Where is your father making better out of good?"

"On the mill; grinding grain into flour and grits."

"What is your mother killing in the birch-grove and what does she bring home?"

"Fleas."

"Where turns your sister her back to the wind?"

"In the fields, burning rubbish."

"Where is your brother, if he is not on earth nor in heaven?"

"On the apple-tree."

"Well answered, but now, listen. To-morrow come to the palace; but do not come dressed or undressed, neither by foot nor on horseback, neither by road nor by footpath; do not step into the room, nor stand outside. To-morrow I will expect you."

"I will come."

The next day the Girl entangled herself in a net, bound the net to the goat's neck and directed the goat to follow the track to the palace. When





BY CHANCE HE MET HIS DAUGHTER, THE QUEEN

she arrived she freed herself from the goat, stepped with one foot over the threshold, with the other foot outside, and she greeted the King with the words: "Here I am."

The King was much surprised and at the same time pleased that his order was so exactly obeyed. He understood now, that this Girl was really clever, a thousand times cleverer than the daughters of all the kings, princes, gentry and other citizens. He told the Girl to go into the next room, and to put on the clothes prepared for her.

When the Peasant Girl appeared again before the King, clad in the royal robes, the King asked her to become his wife, and the preparations for the wedding started immediately.

In a week a brilliant wedding was celebrated. High and low were invited to the feast. The bride's parents, brother and sisters were present. At the end of the wedding-feast, which lasted a whole week, the King said to his bride that two things he would require from her in the future: she must not have anything to do with her parents and never meddle with his affairs.

The young bride silently listened to these requirements.

For some time the King lived happily with his young wife and she was widely praised for her great wisdom.





THE QUEEN GAVE THE KING A GLASS OF WINE

In the meantime the King's father-in-law was working with his horse in the King's fields. His horse had a foal and it happened that the foal got attached to the King's steed, ran after it and did not return to its mother. The peasant applied to the manager of the estate, asking him to give back his foal. But the manager refused to do so, ex-



plaining in his cleverness, that when the foal runs after the steed it must be his own.

The peasant went to the King to complain, but the King happened to be in a bad humor and upheld the manager's decision.

Sorrowfully the man left the palace, determined to go home. By chance he met his daughter, the Queen, who consoled him and gave him advice as to what he should do. She told him to be cheerful, and to come on the next day at dinner-time to the King's park. There he would find a sand heap, and he must take a sieve and sift the sand.

At that time the King was usually coming for a walk and would certainly ask him what he was doing. "Then answer that you are fishing. On the King's reply, 'What a silly man you are,' say that, 'It is as possible that fishes are found in a sand heap, as it is that a foal could be born to a steed.' Then the King will understand his mistake and will give you justice."

On the next day everything happened just as the Queen had foretold her father. The King ordered the manager to return the foal to its real owner.

At the same time it was clear to the King that his wife had disobeyed his orders, and talked to her father and meddled with his affairs.

Angrily he asked his wife to leave the palace. However, he allowed her to take with her the dear-



est and most precious thing she wanted, in reward for having been a good wife.

Quietly, as always, the Queen accepted this decision. "Let your wish be fulfilled. But before parting let us eat and drink together, and invite some friends to the parting feast."

To this the King consented readily. The Queen was gay and entertaining as usual. When the guests were gone, the Queen gave the King a glass of red wine, saying that it was the last they were going to drink together. She, however, had put some sleeping powder in the wine, and the King soon fell into a heavy sleep.

Then, with the help of the servants, the Queen carried the King into a coach and they drove to her father's hut.

Next morning, when the King awoke, he did not at once recognize where he was, but when he saw his wife he asked angrily what it meant, how did she dare to bring him to her father's hut.

"You gave the permission yourself!" smiled the Queen in answer. "Darling, you remember you allowed me to take with me the dearest and the most precious thing I want, and that thing is you!"

The King embraced his clever wife and together they returned to the royal palace. The King never again forbade his wife to meet her parents, or to interest herself in his affairs.



**TALL PETER AND SHORT
PETER**

FROM THE PETER JAY
PETER



TALL PETER AND SHORT PETER

ONCE upon a time a prosperous landowner had two serfs. One of them was big and tall and was called Tall Peter, while the other was short and thin like a child and they called him Short Peter.

One day the two Peters were sent into the woods to cut trees; each of them got his own feed-bag with provisions for the whole day. The two men worked until they were soaked with perspiration. At last they grew very hungry.

Tall Peter said:

“Listen, Short Peter! Let us first eat your food and then the food in my bag.”

“Very well! Let us eat! There is no reason



why we should open both bags at once!" agreed Short Peter.

And soon all his provisions for the day were gone. Refreshed they continued briskly with their work and their axes flashed in their hands and chips flew far around. After a while Short Peter begged:

"Let us eat some more, Tall Peter, I am very hungry!"

They sat down but Tall Peter did not wish to give his companion any of his own food; he said:

"If you bother me, I shall beat you."

"Oh, but I am so hungry! What can I have to eat?" complained the little fellow.

"Look, there in the bush is a mouse's nest," sneered the other, "help yourself! In time of famine mice are good food."

In the bush Short Peter found the nestful of young mice and thought:

"Perhaps for want of better food they are good enough."

Thereupon the old mouse pleaded:

"Oh, dear little man, have pity on my little ones! They are so small and weak and would never satiate your hunger. If ever you are in need of help, we will be at hand!"

Good-natured Short Peter thought:

"Well then, as for me you may live in peace."



He repressed his hunger until evening, when they both went home.

On the following day the two Peters continued their work in the woods. Tall Peter strode on ahead and the little man trotted behind. After they had worked for some time Tall Peter again proposed to eat and again suggested to begin with his companion's food-bag.

"Surely he will not be so mean as he was yesterday," thought Short Peter and agreed willingly. But when the turn came to eat out of Tall Peter's supply, the latter again threatened to beat him, saying:

"Look, under this tree-stump is a swarm of bees! Eat the honey."

"Since there is nothing better, it may do well enough," and Short Peter went to get the honey.

"Have mercy on us! Do not plunder our nest! We have very little honey, indeed, and the honeycombs are full of baby bees. If ever you are in need of help, we will help you!" pleaded the bees.

"A drop of honey will certainly not keep me alive! As for me, fill your whole stump with honey!"

Hungry, he worked till evening and when he came home he ate his supper.

On the third day the same thing happened again. Tall Peter proposed to eat first the pro-



visions his companion had brought, promising not to cheat him this time. But again he would not give Short Peter of his own provisions and mocked him. Short Peter burst into tears; he was so hungry, weary and cold.

"There on the tree is an eagle's nest; go and eat the eaglets!" advised Tall Peter.

Short Peter climbed the tree, but the old eagle pleaded pitifully:

"Do not kill my eaglets! They are so small and you will not get much nourishment from them. In return I shall always be at hand, whenever you may need me."

"Very well! Remain in peace!" and Short Peter climbed down.

On the next day Short Peter was firm and would not give a crumb out of his own food-bag.

"Beware, Short Peter, if you do not share with me you will see what will happen when you come home!"

In the evening when they came home, Tall Peter went at once to his Master and said:

"Honorable Sir! You can make good use of Little Peter if only you will compel him to work under pain of death."

"What kind of work is it then?" inquired the Master.

"To-day, in the woods, Short Peter said that in



three days he could build a waxen church with an earthen wall around it and place in it a twelve-toned bell, if he chose."

Instantly Short Peter was sent for and his Master said:

"Listen, Short Peter! In three days' time you must build me a waxen church, make an earthen wall around it and set up in its tower a twelve-toned bell. If you do not finish this work in time your life will be forfeit. Now go, eat your supper and begin with the task immediately!"

Before Short Peter could utter a word, his Master had left the room.

"What is to be done?" wailed Short Peter and weeping bitterly he went towards the wood.

There a bee buzzed into his ear:

"Little Peter, why are you so sad?"

"Better, little creature, that you do not ask about such things. You cannot help me!"

"Tell me at least! Perhaps I can."

When the bee heard about the task assigned to Short Peter, it comforted him as well as it could and bade him to sleep calmly that night, and the next morning he would see what had happened. There was nothing else Short Peter could do and so he went to sleep. Bad dreams gave him no rest and long before daybreak he arose and walked about trying to forget his fears.



Scarcely had he opened the door when a loud humming and buzzing noise reached his ears as of bees swarming. He looked around—and behold! Miracle of miracles! There stood the waxen church, the bees were just finishing the spire of the church tower. His task was accomplished! The church had beautiful yellow walls of wax, window-panes of honey and a roof made of honey-comb.

“Oh, you kind little creatures! It is too good to be true!” shouted the overjoyed Peter. “Now if I only could succeed with the wall, I should be saved, surely then my Master would not insist on having a twelve-toned bell. For such a bell cannot be found in the whole world.”

Wandering on he met a mouse who asked him:

“Friend, why are you in such a bad humor?”

“I am a poor unhappy man! How can I build an earthen wall around the church! It would take a regiment of soldiers many days to accomplish.”

The mouse bade him to have no fear but to go to sleep in peace.

“Well,” thought Peter, “perhaps the mouse will help me as the bee did,” and he slept.

In the morning a man-high wall surrounded the waxen church and thousands of mice were sharpening the top edge of the wall.

“My thanks and blessings upon you, you dili-





HE RUSHED OFF IN PURSUIT OF THE THIEVES

gent little creatures!" exclaimed Short Peter. "But from where shall I get the twelve-toned church bell?"

Scarcely had he asked the question when an eagle came flying and perched on the new wall.

"What is troubling you, dear friend?" asked the bird.



Short Peter told of his last and most difficult task, for he believed there was no such thing as a twelve-toned church bell.

"True, it is hard to get but we may try," said the eagle. "As far as I know Vanapagan possesses such a bell but it hangs just over his bed-chamber and as soon as somebody touches it, it rings loudly, warning Vanapagan of the danger. But if you are brave, come with me and let us try our luck."

"It makes no difference to me where I die!" replied Short Peter; he mounted the eagle and away they soared! A whole day they flew and another and on the third day the eagle descended and said:

"Now we are arriving in the realm of Vanapagan. Take this little rod from the ground and hide it in your bosom."

Then the eagle flew a little further and again stopping, said:

"Take this sand-grain and hide it in your bosom," and again they flew on.

"Take this water-drop and hide it in your bosom," the eagle bade him for the third time and they proceeded.

From far off they saw a big farm.

"Now keep quiet," whispered the eagle, "that is the home of Vanapagan and his family. When



we find the bell, be careful when you unfasten it. Speak not a single word or great misfortune will befall us."

Soon they reached the bell. Short Peter tried to untie the knot but suddenly the bell rang out in many tones: tillllllllll!

"Who is that who touches my bell?" thundered Vanapagan from his bedroom.

The eagle answered:

"Little eagle touched your bell."

Vanapagan was reassured for he thought that an eagle could not take his bell.

Short Peter tried again to untie the knot and again the bell rang in many tones: tillllllll!

"Who is that who touches my bell?" thundered Vanapagan from his bedroom.

"Little eagle touched your bell," he received for answer.

In the meantime Short Peter had loosened the knot, seized the bell and the eagle carried them both away, the bell ringing incessantly and louder and louder: tillllll!

Too late Vanapagan understood how he was led by the nose and he rushed off to pursue the thieves.

"Drop your little rod and say: 'Let a dense forest spring up,'" said the eagle. And immediately there was a forest.



When Vanapagan reached the impassable forest he shouted:

“Bring axes,
Bring axes,
Clear the way!”

Quickly a road was cut through the forest and Vanapagan continued his pursuit.

“Look back, how near is he?” asked the eagle again.

“He is overtaking us!”

“Then throw the sand-grain down and say: ‘Let a high mountain arise.’”

Instantly a huge mountain rose between them and their pursuer.

Vanapagan shouted towards his home:

“Bring shovels,
Bring shovels,
Dig through!”

Together with his son Vanapagan dug a passage through the mountain and their bodies streamed with perspiration. Soon Vanapagan was at the heels of the fugitives, nearly overtaking them.

“Spill the water-drop and say: ‘Let a big sea appear!’” taught the eagle and all of a sudden an angry, dark sea formed behind them.

When Vanapagan arrived on the seashore, he



cursed and swore terribly in great vexation. His son and wife followed close behind.

"Let us drink up all the sea!" shouted Vanapagan and they started to drink. Vanapagan drank and drank and puffed and puffed until he had no room for another drop.

"Bring the hoops,
Put hoops around me!"

The son fastened the hoops around his father's body. Vanapagan drank some more and shouted again:

"Tighten the hoops,
Tighten the hoops!"

Again Vanapagan drank and puffed. But all of a sudden a noise of an explosion was heard. Vanapagan had burst and the water flowed back into the sea.

Short Peter, carried by the eagle, reached home before dawn and placed the bell in the church tower. After breakfast in the morning Short Peter invited his Master to come and inspect his work. His Master was pleased beyond measure and found no words to express his admiration. He gave Short Peter much money and other costly things so that Peter could live in plenty to the end of his days.



When his Master had finished his praises, Short Peter said:

“Honorable Sir! Tall Peter promised to perform a still greater miracle than mine and if you like you can see something that no one has yet seen before. Tall Peter said that he could sleep in a stove after it had been heated with seven cords of wood.”

“Oh-o-o-o! I really should like to see such a feat! Heat the stove this minute!” ordered the Master.

The stove was heated red-hot and Tall Peter was pushed into it. Did he ever awaken from his sleep there and get out again—nobody knows.



KALEV AND LINDA





KALEV AND LINDA

(From the National Epic of Estonia "Kalevipoeg")

I

FAR, far away in the rocky North, near the sacred oak-grove of Taara, there lived three brothers.

When they grew up, all three went into the wide, wide world to seek their fortunes.

The oldest brother went to Russia and there he became a great merchant.

The second brother went to Lapland and his fortune was to become a brave soldier.

The youngest brother flew away from his home on the back of the Northern Eagle. In their long flight to the South they soared over the Gulf of Finland and lo! an unknown land rose before them. Circling over it hither and thither they saw



wild, dark forests swaying beneath them. By a lucky chance and by the clever guidance of Taara the Eagle at last descended on the rocky coast of Virumaa.

Here the youngest brother founded a kingdom, built a stronghold and became its first ruler. This was Kalev, the father of Kalevipoeg the great national hero of Estonia.

Old Kalev had reigned for a long time, when he thought to himself, it were not good to live alone and he decided to find himself a wife.

In the district of Lääne there lived a young, lonely widow. One Sunday morning as she was taking her cattle to the pasture, she found on the path and in the footprints left by the cattle three things—a hen, the egg of a grouse and a young crow.

She picked them up and took them home with her to cheer her in her sorrow and loneliness. She put the hen in a coop to hatch the grouse's egg but threw the young crow behind the bin in the granary. Immediately the egg began to hatch and the hen and young crow began to grow.

Three months later the widow went to the storehouse, to see what had become of the things she had found. And what did she see? Neither chicken nor grouse did her eyes perceive, but beauteous maidens instead.



The hen had changed into the fair Maiden Salme; from the egg of the grouse was hatched the gracious Maiden Linda, while the young crow had grown into a poor slave-girl, a maid-of-all-work.

Salme (considered the oldest of the sisters), was courted by many suitors. Her sparkling beauty was praised far and near. Not only mortal lovers besieged her with their proposals of marriage, but even the Moon, the Sun and the eldest son of the Polar Star wooed the lovely Salme.

So the Moon arrived in a magnificent chariot, drawn by fifty horses and accompanied by sixty attendants.

But Salme refused the Moon, for he was too unsteady in his habits—rising sometimes at dawn, at other times at sunset, and sometimes shining even late into the afternoon.

Then came the Sun, with glowing eyes, but Salme found him too fickle; he was the cause of too much harm in scorching the Earth in the time of Summer droughts, or at harvest time in sending down rain in torrents.

The Oldest Son of the Polar Star came last of all, accompanied, as the other suitors, by a train of sixty attendants.

His suit was immediately accepted by Salme, because the Star is always constant in his habits and never harms at the time of sowing nor harvest.



The Star's horse was taken to the stable and he himself invited to come in.

Hundreds of guests, from far and from near, were invited to celebrate the wedding feast of the Son of the Polar Star and the Maiden Salme.

During the feast the wedding-dances and games went joyously on:

"Then they danced the Estonian cross-dance,
Whirled around in Viru dances,
Treading heavy the sandy ground,
Spoiling all the pretty sward."

In the midst of the wedding-festival, the Moon and the Sun returned, with still greater pomp, to woo the graceful Linda who had hatched from the grouse's egg. But Linda refused them, as her sister had done, and she said to the Moon:

"Never shall I choose for husband
Moon, the ruler of the nights!
For his ways are much too varied:
Sometimes does he rise at evening,
Sometimes just before the daybreak;
Sometimes vanishes in fog,
Or hides his face behind the clouds.
At times he does not rise at all,
Leaving his domain unguarded,
Or he guards it even in daytime,
Staying in the sky till noon."

The Moon went home sorrowfully, and looked more angry and paler than usual.



To the next wooer, the Sun, Linda said:

“Never shall I choose for husband
Sun, the master of the days!
For his moods are much too changeful
And the harm he does is great:
When on the brightest harvest day
Sends us pouring rain in torrents
Or at busy sowing time
Parches ground with fiery heat
Drying dead all scattered seeds.
He shines the whole day long in summer,
Forgets to shine at all in winter.”

The Sun left her in a passion of anger, and shone with a fiercely menacing glow.

The third wooer who came was the Water, the powerful Master of the Water-Realm. With great pomp he drove up, mounted on a gray steed. But Linda did not like him at all, because of his angry, devastating floods, and the terrifying roar of his raging seas, which so often bring much undeserved misery and suffering to the defenseless people.

In tears the Water departed away, flowing sadly out of the gate.

The Water was followed by the Wind, who rushed up in whirlwind, riding his fiery stallion, Tempest. But Linda thought that a delicate Maiden could never enjoy the raging of the wind, nor the howling of the snow-storm.





THE WIND RUSHED UP IN A WHIRLWIND

In a furious mood the Wind dashed off.

The fifth suitor was the son of the famous King of Kungla, who it was said, possessed enormous wealth.

The Guests and the relatives felt flattered by the court of this mighty and wealthy suitor, but Linda objected that his sisters were said to be wicked and quarrelsome, and would treat his wife, a stranger and a newcomer in the family, with little kindness.



Finally there came to the Lääne farm the handsome giant, Kalev, accompanied by a splendid suite.

The guests, the relatives and even the widow, Linda's foster-mother were opposed to him, frightened by the sight of the mighty Giant but the handsome young Kalev pleased Linda immensely, and to him she was willing to give her hand in marriage.

"This is the man, who pleases me
And his wooing I accept."

Kalev was invited to enter, to eat and drink at the wedding table and to join the guests in their festive gayety. But Kalev did not drink and neither did he eat before Linda appeared. Restless in his eagerness to see his bride, he clanked his sword, rang his spurs and jingled his purse, demanding to see Linda, the grouse's daughter.

Linda had gone to attire herself, and calling from the other room, begged for a little delay:

"You dear, unreasonable Youth!
You gave me time to grow and bloom
Give now time to robe for you!"

The poor slave-girl, the maid-of-all-work, helped Linda to dress.

How beautiful Linda was! When she entered



the room, where Kalev and the guests awaited her, she charmed all with her brilliant beauty. All eyes stared at her in admiration. Surely Murueit herself and her daughters, the Nymphs, must have secretly helped to attire her! Even the widow, her foster-mother did not at first recognize her, and asked in surprise:

“Is it the Moon, or is it the Sun, or the young daughter of the Evening-Glow?”

Then the wedding of Linda and Kalev was celebrated with even greater cheer than that of her sister Salme. Friends and relatives came from far and from near in great numbers.

Again they danced the national Estonian wedding dances and played the bridal games.

All around the multi-colored chains of dancers moved:

“Then they danced the Estonian cross dance
Whirled around in Viru dances,
Treading heavy the sandy ground,
Spoiling all the pretty sward.”

Soon Kalev had to depart for his home. He bade Linda part from the merry guests, and take leave of the widow, her foster-mother:

“Farewell, dear foster-mother,
Far away now must I go
Leave the places most beloved
The friendly farms behind forever.”



They entered the sledge, Kalev cracked the whip and away they sped across snow-covered plains and through vast forests.

At Linda's home, at the Lääne farm, the Moon gazed sadly after them, the Sun shone angrily, and the young birches at the entrance wept bitterly. But Linda was happy and did not share the sadness of the others because she believed that Taara would grant her greater happiness in her new life with her beloved Kalev. They drove by day and they drove by night, in sunshine and in moonlight, keeping their course in the direction of the distant home of Kalev.

II

The life of Kalev and Linda was a happy one.

They were blessed with many sons. When the sons grew to manhood they wandered into foreign lands to seek their fortune.

Towards the evening of Kalev's life two of his youngest sons were still children and at home. Kalev foretold that one more son would be born to Linda and this, her youngest son, would become a great hero, worthy of his father in appearance and in deeds. The glory and greatness of this son would never be forgotten in all Estonia; his name and his deeds would be praised in all times.

Kalev also ordered that his kingdom should



remain strong and undivided, ruled over only by one of his sons. When all his sons should be of age, they should decide by lots which of them is to be the king, the protector of the people.

Soon after that Kalev fell dangerously ill.

Then Linda took her brooch, hung it on a thread and began to spin it around.

She took Lepatriinu (the Lady-bird), and sent her to find physicians for her suffering husband and to ask advice of the famous Sorcerers.

For seven days Linda kept spinning the brooch; for seven days Lepatriinu flew on her journey. She flew over land and over sea, over three kingdoms to the North. There she saw the Moon rising and asked if the Moon could tell her if Kalev would ever recover from his illness.

The Moon listened silently, looking sadly down, but he did not answer and went on his way.

On and on, over plains and dark forests, flew Lepatriinu, passing the Golden Mountain. There she saw the Evening Star rising and asked the Star, as she had asked the Moon.

The bright-eyed Star glittered on the edge of the sky but refused to answer, and extinguished its light as it set below the horizon.

Again the brooch spun for seven days and for seven days more Lepatriinu flew over lands and over seas, through three kingdoms to the South.



This time she met the rising Sun ; she greeted the golden-eyed Light Giver and asked if Father Kalev would recover.

The Sun listened with glowing cheeks, but did not answer.

Again Linda spun her brooch and sent Lepatriinu out to beseech the help and advice of the famous Sorcerers. Lepatriinu soon encountered the Wind-Sorcerer, and with him the celebrated Soothsayer of Finland, and Manatark, the greatest of all Magicians.

Lepatriinu asked if Kalev would recover.

The three wise men mused for a moment and answered with one voice :

“That which has been parched by drought, withered by heat, and bleached by moonlight, would not take root nor bloom again.”

Before Lepatriinu reached home, mighty Kalev was dead.

Seven days and seven nights Linda wept incessantly, mourning for her husband. Kalev had given her all the happiness she could have desired, and now she herself wished to dig him his grave and thus to pay the last tribute of her love.

The grief-stricken widow dug a cool grave thirty ells below the green sward, and there she buried the giant Kalev.



"Soon the green sward sprang from the soil
And scented flowers covered the grave;—
From his eyes grew dark blue fir-trees,
And his feet the sacred elms."

Month after month Linda mourned the death of her dear husband. In the beginning of the fourth month, to preserve the memory of Kalev, she decided to build a great memorial over his grave. In her apron the widow began to carry heavy stones to heap over the tomb of Kalev:

"Linda, lonely, mournful widow,
Begins to carry heavy rocks
To raise a hill on Kalev's grave,
A great memorial of bygone days,
To show the sons and daughters of the future
Where lies the buried mound of Kalev,
The peaceful abode of the Nation's Father."

Nobody knows how high she would have raised the high towering hill, if an accident had not brought to an end her work.

One day Linda carried a heavy rock, and oh! what a misfortune! The strings of her apron tore, the stone rolled to the ground. She tugged and strained, but she found herself too exhausted to pick it up. In her grief Linda sat on the stone and burst into tears over the hard lot and loneliness of widowhood. Thus she wept for an hour, and longer; her eyes were like flowing springs and her



tears soon filled the stone-pit; but the earth did not soak in these precious tears of grief but wished to preserve them for the future. So from Linda's tears was formed "Ülemiste Järv" or the "Upper Lake," near Tallinn, to remind the people of our days of the deep mourning and heart-breaking lamentations of Linda, the faithful widow of Kalev.

This accident ended the construction of the memorial hill on Kalev's grave but Linda had raised it sufficiently high and it still strikes the eyes of those who chance to see it:

"Whoever chances to be in Tallinn
And knows his eyes to cast around,
Will surely see the great tomb-hill
Where the later generations
Erected many stately houses—
And also built a great cathedral.
Now this imposing place is known
By the name 'The Dome of Tallinn'.
There Old Kalev abides in peace,
Adored and praised by his people."



THE TWO BROTHERS

2000-2001 2001-2002



THE TWO BROTHERS

ONCE there lived two brothers; one was rich, the other, desperately poor. As is commonly known, the rich man in his abundance does not give much thought to the poor man's need and this was quite so with our brothers. The rich brother in his greediness would not give his poor brother even a spoonful of broth, though he beg for it as much as he pleased.

It came to pass that the rich man gave a great feast. His brother waited humbly and hoped in the depths of his heart that perhaps his brother would relent and invite him, but all in vain.

Then a good idea came into his head.

He went to the river, caught three big pikes



and decided to bring them, as a gift, to his brother. He spoke to him humbly and with respect as to a gentleman. But what good did it do? The rich man said only:

“Thank you,” and turned away.

There was nothing more the poor man could do than to tuck his coat tails behind the belt and to go home.

On his way home, overcome with both sorrow and anger, he was almost in tears and thought:

“You have a brother in name but he is worse than a perfect stranger.”

At this moment he noticed a Beggar sitting by the roadside. The Beggar rose quicker than one would expect from his looks and came towards the poor man. He asked:

“My friend, why do you hang your nose and look so discouraged?”

“How can I not be?” was the reply. “I brought my brother three nice big pikes; thanks I got none, not even a mouthful of fish to taste.”

“Nothing? You certainly must have received something,” returned the Beggar.

“All he said was: Thank you—and that was all.”

“Give this ‘Thank you’ to me and you will become a rich man,” promised the Beggar and bade him to go home. There he would find his Poverty





"MY FRIEND, WHY DO YOU LOOK SO DISCOURAGED?"

hidden beneath the hearth and this he must throw into the river.

Then each went his own way.

When he came home, the poor man heard an unusual chirping and squeaking in the hearth. Hurriedly he started to dig; at last he managed to catch Poverty, and threw it into the river.

And behold! What great change came into his life! How successful he was in all his undertakings! His corn-fields thrived, his cattle grew well,



his pigs and sheep increased in numbers and his barns and stables, his bath-houses and sledges, indeed all his possessions soon prospered better than those of his brother.

When the news of this unexpected prosperity reached the ears of his rich brother, he was filled with bitter envy, and he could not rest before he knew what had brought this sudden change.

Then in a passion of anger and envy he cursed and swore to bring Poverty back to its former place, where it really belonged, so that it could never be said his once poor brother surpassed him in wealth and prosperity.

With this in mind he went to the river and began to search for Poverty. Here he sat and fished and fished and waited until at last he caught it. Overjoyed at his success he hurried home, but there idle curiosity seized him and he thought to himself:

“It can do no harm to have a closer look at this odd thing, which they call Poverty.”

But a thing happened he never had thought of! Poverty escaped from his hands and slipped under his own hearth! All his attempts to get it out failed, and there it has stayed ever since.

And the once rich brother grew poorer and poorer as days went on and poor he remained for the rest of his life.



TIIDU, THE MUSICIAN



TIIDU, THE MUSICIAN

IN days gone by there lived a poor, landless peasant, who was more generously blessed with children, than with bread. His sons and daughters early began to shift for themselves to help their father support the large family.

Only one son, of all his children, was lazy, or as the village people said: "He had some idler's blood under his nails." Neither kindness nor punishment availed, and with every year the boy grew lazier and lazier. In winter he sat behind the stove; in summer he lay in the shade of blossoming bushes and his only work was—to whistle, and to play tunes on his willow-pipe. And his listeners had to concede that this the boy did very well indeed!



One day, as he sat again under a bush by the roadside, competing with the birds in the art of whistling, a Pilgrim addressed him in a friendly manner and asked:

"Tell me, my son, which trade would you prefer?"

"None. No trade interests me. The only thing I wish is to become a rich man, so that I should never need to work, and to obey the orders of other people."

"How can you grow rich, if you do not wish to work? 'No mouse runs into the mouth of a sleeping cat.' He who would thrive must work with diligence or . . ." Here the boy interrupted him impatiently:

"Stop! Say no more! I have heard this hundreds of times but to me these words are just like the water, poured down a duck's back. I never shall become a laborer!"

But the Pilgrim, an Old Gray Man, advised the boy to make use of his gift, and make music his trade.

"Get some good instrument, learn to play it as skilfully as you play your willow-pipe and you will receive bread and money, wherever merry people live."

"How can I get an instrument?" asked the boy anxiously.



“First of all earn some money by playing your willow-pipe and leaf whistling, for in this you are already perfect; then with this money buy yourself one. Some day, I hope to see you again and we shall see what you have accomplished.” The Pilgrim proceeded on his way.

Tiidu—that was the boy’s name—was pleased with the advice given and decided to follow it and to seek his fortune. Without saying a word to any one about his plans, he left his home. His parents were glad to be rid of the idler and his father hoped that the hardships Tiidu would have to bear in the wide world, would gradually brush off his laziness and, perhaps, make a man of him.

For weeks Tiidu strolled from village to village, from manor to manor, from farm to farm; the people he met were kind to him and seemed to enjoy his melodies; they gave him enough to eat and to drink, sometimes even a few pennies into the bargain. This money he hoarded carefully, adding penny to penny till he had enough to buy a good bag-pipe. Fortune smiled on him now. In a few years he became a famous bag-piper. Tiidu’s playing forced every foot to skip! No feasts, no weddings were celebrated without Tiidu, the Musician. Far and near his name was known, as if he were a famed Magician. Not only the peasants but also the nobility admired his playing



and vied with each other, inviting him to their manors. Generous gifts were given to Tiidu; noble maidens tied silken ribbons to his hat, and ladies knitted gloves in colorful patterns for him.

But Tiidu did not appreciate his good fortune; his heart's desire was as before, to become a rich man. This thought gave him no rest, and drove him on to new wanderings. From day to day his greed grew. In his childhood he had heard fabulous tales about the improbable wealth of the Land of Kungla! Day and night Tiidu planned how to get there. He believed he could easily make his fortune, if only he were there.

For a time he rambled along the seashore hoping, by lucky chance, to find a ship, which would take him across the sea. So he came to the city of Narva, in the harbor of which were many foreign boats. Among them Tiidu found a ship bound for Kungla. The fare for the passage was higher than the stingy musician wished to pay. With the aid of a young sailor, however, he was smuggled on board, and hid in a dark corner among the barrels.

The next night, when the ship was already far out in the open sea, Tiidu's friend was alone on watch on the deck. He signaled Tiidu to come out of his hiding-place and urged him to simulate a scene of drowning in order to be rescued and then





TIIDU'S PLAYING FORCED EVERY FOOT TO SKIP

taken legally on board. He tied a strong rope around Tiidu's body, fastened the other end of the rope to the ship, and lowered him into the sea. At first Tiidu tried to object and felt rather uneasy, but being a good swimmer, he concluded it would not be 'difficult to keep himself for a while on the surface.

Then his friend, the sailor, shouted loudly, awoke the crew and called them to come and look at the strange, human-like creature, swimming in the wake of the ship. The men gazed at the floating body, with their eyes and mouths wide open in astonishment. The Captain was notified and when he saw the creature in the water he crossed himself three times in succession and asked, turning to the swimmer:

"Tell me which you are, a ghost or a mortal being?"

Tiidu replied: "I am a poor mortal, whose strength is at its end, and I must perish, if you will not take pity on me."

The Captain ordered a rope to be thrown to him and to have him pulled out. Tiidu seized the end of the rope, at the same time cutting off the other rope he already had around him. When he was thus "saved" and safe and sound on board again, the Captain asked:

"Now tell us, how did you come here?"



"All the way from the harbor I swam behind your boat. In this way I hoped to reach the shores of the Land of Kungla, for I did not have the money to pay for the passage."

"You should thank Heaven for being alive! I shall take you free to the coveted land."

The Captain ordered dry clothes for Tiidu and good care to be taken of him. Tiidu and his friend, the sailor, chuckled with satisfaction at the success of their ruse.

During the rest of the voyage Tiidu entertained the crew with his music.

The Captain repeated again and again, that never in his life had he listened to such enchanting melodies.

On their arrival at Kungla, rumor spread like wind about the wonderful musician, fished out of the sea! One night and two days the brave man had swum behind the ship!

This story roused a great interest in Tiidu. People hastened to see him and asked to hear the story of his adventure from his own lips. And poor Tiidu, though he disliked it and felt ashamed and embarrassed, had to repeat again and again the invented tale of his bravery. He wished, as soon as possible, to leave the place and to go to the capital, where nobody would know anything about him and his fabulous swimming.



In a few days he reached the capital. How magnificent, wonderful, superb it appeared to him! But the more he stared at all the great splendor, the more he pitied his own poverty. He felt so timid and humiliated, that he did not dare even to play his bag-pipe before these important looking, rich people. For many days he loitered around, trying to find some work, but in vain. Soon he abandoned the hope of making a great fortune in a short time. At length he became a cook's help in the house of a wealthy merchant.

If he had not seen with his own eyes, he could have never imagined that it were possible to possess such riches! In the house of the merchant the food was cooked in silver kettles, the cakes were fried in silver pans, and the meals were served in golden bowls and on golden plates. Even the pigs were given their food in silver pails instead of troughs!

In this land of wonderful wealth the cook's help Tiidu lived in plenty, and his month's wages were higher than he would have earned in a year at home. But his avaricious nature made him suffer, for daily he grew greedier and greedier. The thought that all the treasures he saw did not and would never belong to him, tormented him incessantly.

Thus Tiidu had lived for years in the house of



the merchant, when on a Sunday afternoon clad in his best clothes he went to the city garden. Walking among the strangers Tiidu was overjoyed when he perceived a familiar face. But he did not remember where he had seen the man, or who he was. The stranger sat alone under a leafy lindentree. Tiidu approached shyly for he was not certain if he would be recognized. He coughed: ahem!—ahem, ahem! to attract the attention of the man; then he drew closer and greeted the stranger. The latter returned his greeting and asked abruptly:

“Where is your bag-pipe?”

The stranger was no one else than Tiidu's friend, the Pilgrim, who long ago had advised him to become a musician.

After Tiidu had finished his story his Friend frowned, shook his head in displeasure and said:

“A fool you are and a fool you will remain! You must have gone crazy to neglect your talent and to have become a cook's help! As musician you would have earned here more in one day than you are getting now in half a year. Run home, bring your bag-pipe and play! Then you will see that I am telling the truth.”

Returning with his bag-pipe Tiidu sat on the bench, beside his Friend, and reluctantly began to play. At the very first sounds a new spirit seemed





"HE HAS SOME IDLER'S BLOOD UNDER HIS NAILS"

to have taken possession of his bag-pipe, as if it were to him a new and unknown instrument. Never before had its tones been so silvery clear and so beautiful. A huge crowd had gathered around the linden-tree; sweeter and more enchanting grew Tiidu's melodies.

Then his Friend arose, took off his hat and began to collect gifts for the musician. Shining silver and golden coin fell thick as hail into the hat from all sides! A few merry tunes more and Tiidu left his delighted listeners.



"Wonderful musician, come back next Sunday to entertain us," he heard called from all directions.

At the city gate his Friend said:

"Do you not find that to-day's work is preferable to that of a cook's help? For the second time I have directed you upon the right way; like a clever man seize the ox by its horns with both hands and do not miss your luck again! Mark well what I tell you. Every Sunday afternoon play under the linden-tree in the city garden and amuse the city people with your pleasing music. Buy a top hat, set it before you, that your admirers may place in it their tokens of appreciation. Never refuse to play when you are invited to their homes, and be contented with the reward given. Most of all beware of becoming greedy! Some day we shall meet again."

Soon Tiidu left the house of the merchant forever. Every Sunday he went to the appointed place in the city garden. His audience, as well as his earnings increased steadily. From that time on Tiidu prospered. He ordered silver pipes for his bag-pipe, so that they would shine and sparkle gaily in the sun and in the streaming candle-light.

The King of Kungla had come once to the city garden to see his people amuse themselves; from afar he heard Tiidu playing and invited the skilful



bag-piper to his palace to play to his court; and gave him a purse full of gold. The high nobility and the wealthiest people of the land followed the example set by the King and some even surpassed him in generosity.

Years passed by and Tiidu was richer than he once had dreamed to become. At last he determined to return home. As a wealthy man he now hired a ship to take him, with all his treasures, to his native land. Numerous chests with gold and silver utensils, others filled with coin, were loaded into the ship. The wind was favorable and drove the ship swiftly into the open sea; soon nothing but sky and water were to be seen.

Towards night, however, a strong breeze rose and gradually developed into a raging storm; the sea roared, lashing the foamy billows up to the sky. The Captain seemed unable to keep on his course and in the end the storm became the only master of the ship! For one day and two nights the ship was driven here and there by the sea; then it hit a heavy rock and sank. The tiny life-boats were unable to withstand the wild sea, they were overturned and all of the crew perished. Tiidu was the only one to survive; clinging to a floating piece of timber, he was tossed ashore by the waves. Exhausted, more dead than alive, he lay motionless on the rocky shore; soon he was fast asleep. He dreamed



that his Friend visited him and gave him drink from his cask which refreshed him strangely and seemed to pour a new spirit into him.

When he awoke he found himself lying on a bemossed rock but he was alone. Refreshed, he went along the shore to look about him; he found the place uninhabited. Neither people, nor animals were to be seen, only deep forest, with abounding succulent plants and trees unknown to him.

What should he do? In distress he sat down to rest. Suddenly a feeling of sincere repentance came over him. Vivid pictures of his past life floated before his eyes. For the first time he realized how wrong he had been, leaving his home without the permission of his parents and loitering around, like a tramp for so long a time.

"Death in this deserted place would be the fit punishment for my behavior," he wailed bitterly. "Least of all do I regret my lost treasures. Easily acquired, easily lost! I only wish my bag-pipe had been spared to console me in my distress and to lighten the burden of my grief."

On advancing further, he noticed an apple-tree and found beautiful red apples among the familiar leaves. He tasted them and what luck! Never in his life had he eaten sweeter or more juicy apples!

"With such apples there will be no fear of starvation," he thought, filling his pockets with the



delicious fruit and proceeding on his way through the thicket.

After wandering for a long time he came to an open plain, which lay like an island in the woods. A brook, babbling gaily, ran through it and beckoned the weary wanderer. Tiidu hastened to the brook to drink some of the crystal-clear water.

Suddenly in the water he beheld his reflection; and he sprang up in terror, trembling like an aspen leaf. Who in his place would not have been frightened? He saw himself disfigured and ugly, with big wattles hanging from his nose. He lamented bitterly over this new mishap.

"Alas! What will become of me! Oh, that any one should see me in my ugliness!" But the more he lamented, the bigger grew the wattles, becoming bluer and bluer, like those of an enraged turkey.

Not far away there grew a bush covered with appetizing nuts. Tiidu had always liked nuts, so even now, in his despair, he felt tempted. He plucked a good handful of them, cracked and ate them. While he ate, his look again strayed to his reflection in the brook, and great was his amazement, when he saw that his nose was shrinking and shrinking and soon was restored to its natural shape and was again in its usual place, just a little above the mouth.



It is easy to imagine his excessive joy! Driven with curiosity he wished to learn what had been the cause of the sudden growth and then of the unexpected shrinking of his nose. Again he ate an apple and behold! the ugly wattles reappeared; he ate some nuts and—they vanished.

"This experience may bring me luck, if I ever come back to live among men," Tiidu thought. He filled his pockets full of nuts, made a basket out of the bark of a tree, and filled it with the apples; this done he lay down to sleep and spent the night under a tree.

Again he dreamed that his Friend visited him, gave him drink from his cask and bade him return to the seashore, whence he might be rescued. Then he added:

"Since you did not regret the loss of your treasures, but bewailed only the loss of your bag-pipe, I shall give you a new one as a token of me."

In the morning when Tiidu recalled his dream, he looked around and true enough! there lay on the ground, the most beautiful bag-pipe he had ever seen. O joy! O happiness! Anxiously he seized it and played to his heart's delight, forgetting his sorrow and grief. He played until the woods echoed gaily in response.

The sun was already high in the heavens when Tiidu reached the seashore and behold! There



was a ship near the shore, with its crew busy making some repairs.

A boat was sent out to take Tiidu on board and the seamen were much surprised to find a human being on an island they had always known to be uninhabited.

By a happy chance Tiidu was taken back to the Land of Kungla, which he thought he had left for ever.

On his arrival he disguised himself, selected the nicest of the apples he had brought with him from the island and went to the King's palace, hoping to sell them. And indeed, soon one of the servants came and bought his whole supply, giving him a higher price than Tiidu had asked.

Tiidu hastened away, for he knew well enough the effect of eating these apples; they would cause wattles to grow. He found lodgings on the outskirts of the city and disguised himself very skillfully. He now wore a long black beard and mustaches, foreign clothes and pretended to be a celebrated foreign Magician, able to heal all diseases and defects.

Next day gloom hung over the city; rumor spread that a great disaster had befallen the palace. The King and all his family had fallen ill after eating apples bought from a stranger. Physicians were summoned but none knew of a remedy, for



never before had they heard of or seen such a malady. They said it was a kind of nose disease, but refused to give further details.

Some physicians advised immediate operation but the King and the Queen objected strongly, being afraid of losing their noses. At last news of a famous foreign Magician reached the palace. Without delay the King sent for him. Nobody could recognize Tiidu in his disguise and, moreover, he spoke with a strong foreign accent.

After he had examined the patients he said with authority that they were suffering from the turkey-disease; he promised to heal them without an operation. He gave each of them a teaspoonful of chopped nuts, which he had prepared in advance and ordered them to lie quietly in a dark room, keep well covered and warm until well. In a few hours they were all well again.

In his joy that he and his family looked natural again, the King would have readily given half of his kingdom, but Tiidu did not ask for much. The shipwreck, the loss of his immense treasures and his own miraculous escape had purged him of his former greed so he accepted only a small sum of money, just enough to buy an estate at home, where he could spend the rest of his life in comfort.

For the second and the last time Tiidu took



leave of the Land of Wealth. On reaching his home he did not make himself known at once. First he bought a fine estate; then he gave a feast to which he invited his family and all his relatives. At the dinner-table he said to them:

“I am Tiidu, your formerly lazy son and brother, who caused much grief to you all and who left his home without the permission of his parents. Fortune has been kind to me, much kinder than I deserved and I have returned a rich man.”

He invited them heartily to come and live on his estate and his father to live with him in his house.

Later on Tiidu married a good, gentle girl, whose only dowry was her beauty and her kind heart. On the night of his wedding day, Tiidu was overcome with amazement when he found his room crowded with chests and boxes, containing all the treasures he had lost. In one of the chests he found written the following words:

“To a good son, who does not forget his parents and relatives, even the sea returns the treasures of which it had robbed him.”

But Tiidu never learned who had been his Friend, his mighty Protector, who had helped him to purge his heart of avarice and greed.



**THE REHEPAPP AND
VANAPAGAN**

THE HISTORY OF
YADATSUMI



THE REHEPAPP AND VANAPAGAN

ONCE a rich landowner had a skilful and able Rehepapp. One Fall, however, one mishap after another pursued the Rehepapp for each time when he came to settle accounts with the granaryman, there was a shortage of grain. The Rehepapp had to pay it out of his own pocket, and in the end even this did not satisfy his master and he ordered him to be flogged.

After one of these hard days at the manor, the Rehepapp was sitting on the bench at the burning kiln-hole, thinking of his troubles. He knew himself innocent and at last he began to swear and to curse aloud.



"What is the matter with you, friend?" asked somebody from behind him.

"What is the matter? Each time when I settle accounts with the granary-man, I am short of grain," replied the Rehepapp sullenly.

The uninvited guest was Vanapagan himself.

"Never mind! Here is a sack, take it and fill it with grain and put it in the corner of the granary. As many times as you tap it with the heel of your left foot, there will be so many sacks of grain left over at every measuring time and this extra grain you may sell." With these words, Vanapagan left.

The Rehepapp did not despise Vanapagan's advice, but tried it out at the first opportunity and behold! Three sacks of grain were left over! The man was happy, and each time he sold the extra grain for which he got plenty of money and his master was again much pleased with him.

The Rehepapp, however, could not get rid of Vanapagan now. Vanapagan sat at the kiln-hole every night, until the cock crowed, played tricks and teased the Rehepapp without end. When the Rehepapp baked potatoes or turnips, Vanapagan was always the first to eat them; when he brought from home some meat or some other tid-bit, Vanapagan stole them from him.

Once as he was sitting at the inn the Rehepapp complained to his companions of his troublesome



relations with Vanapagan. It happened that a Bear-Dancer sat in the corner and listened attentively to his story.

"I know a remedy," remarked the Bear-Dancer. "Take my bear, Pärt, with you and hide him somewhere in a corner; then pick a quarrel with Vanapagan and call the bear to help you."

The Rehepapp was pleased with this plan and took the bear to the thrashing barn that very night. It was not long before Vanapagan was there too.

The Rehepapp was baking turnips.

Vanapagan picked out all that were baked and ate them and jeered:

"What is baked is mine,
What is raw is thine,"

and he threw away all the unbaked turnips. The Rehepapp tried to stop him but in vain. Angrily he threw them back and some of them struck Vanapagan's head.

"Now stop joking! Or I shall give you a good thrashing!" threatened Vanapagan and when the Rehepapp did not cease, Vanapagan sprang up in a fury, and began raining blows on the man's back.

"Pärt, help! Help!" screamed the Rehepapp.

At a bound, Pärt was at his side; wildly he clawed and scratched Vanapagan until Vanapagan begged:





"MY BEAR WILL HELP YOU"

"Do what you will, quarrel as much as you like, only do not scratch my face and my eyes."

But it was not so easy to quiet the angry bear. At last Vanapagan saw his chance and escaped. He had learned his lesson and never came back to trouble the Rehepapp again.

"Ah! It is too good to be true!" sighed the Rehepapp with relief. He gave the Bear-Dancer



many sacks of grain as a reward for his advice and help.

Some time after Vanapagan was wandering about the manor. As he passed the shepherd-boys, he asked:

“Do you know or have you seen, if the Rehepapp of the manor has his black cat still?”

The shepherd-boys knew quite well that the Rehepapp had a black cat, but they had never heard anything about the bear-fight and so they said:

“Yes, his cat is still alive, and lately she had three young ones.”

“If that is so, I can never return. What a pity I forgot my purse on the edge of the kiln and now I cannot hope ever to get it back,” complained Vanapagan to himself.

The shepherd-boys heard him grumbling to himself, and told the Rehepapp what he said. The Rehepapp really found a big bag full of gold and now he became richer even than his own master.

And with Vanapagan he had nothing to do to the end of his days.



GLOSSARY

- Ahti —the ruler of the Waters in Estonian Mythology.
- Alutaga —a district in Northeastern Estonia.
- Brooch-spinning—is a way of fortune telling. A brooch is spun on a thread; when the motion slows down a question is asked. If the motion ceases at once, the answer is unfavorable, but if the motion continues—the answer is favorable.
- Ilmarine —patron of fine arts in Estonian Mythology and himself a master-smith.
- Kalev —mythical giant-ruler of ancient Estonia.
- Kalevipoeg —or the Son of Kalev—the great national hero of Estonia.
- Kungla —a land of wealth, of which fabulous tales were told; probably the island of Gotland in the Baltic Sea was meant; Visby on Gotland was the most important trading center and the richest city in the time of Hanseatic League.
- Kõver —the Wood-Spirit.
- Manatark —the Chief Magician, provided with the greatest powers and knowledge in Magic.
- Murueit —literally: the Sward Mother—one of the protective Deities of the home, the lawn and the garden, which usually surround every Estonian dwelling. The fair and merry daughters of Murueit enrich and embellish greatly the Estonian Fairy-Land.
- Narva —an Estonian port, a historical town and fortress on the Eastern frontier with Russia.



- Peipsi Lake —a large lake on the Eastern border of Estonia.
- Rehepapp —the keeper of the thrashing barn in the Estonian manors.
- Taara —a different name for Vanaisa.
- Tallinn —the picturesque capital of Estonia founded in 1219. Tallinn is an Estonian name while under the foreign rulers it was called Reval. Tallinn is one of the best ports in the Baltic Sea.
- Vanaisa —literally Old Father—the chief Deity of the ancient Estonians, the Creator.
- Vanapagan —literally old pagan—a mischievous character, with supernatural powers; he is tall, stout and strong, but at the same time he is a simpleton and can be very easily outwitted.
- Vanasarvik —Old Hornie—a wicked enemy of men and the ruler of the dark underground domain.
- Whisks —are bunches of dried birch twigs, with leaves on, used for whisking in the Estonian vapor bath-houses, which play an important part in the Estonian household.
- Virumaa —a district in the Northern Estonia on the rocky coast of the Baltic Sea.



